

## **Arden University Quality Assurance Document QA 43 - Nomination and Appointment of External Examiners**

### **Principles**

1. External Examiners will be appointed to any part of a programme of study which contributes directly to an Arden University award.
2. It is the responsibility of Programme Leaders to put forward External Examiner nominations that meet the criteria set out in this document.
3. The Quality and Standards Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of nominations and for making External Examiner appointments in line with the procedures set out in this document.
4. The Quality Manager will maintain a register of External Examiner appointments, which will include details of their job title, the institution at which they are employed, the programmes/modules for which they are responsible, dates of appointment, terms of office and other relevant information to assist in the oversight of external examining arrangements. The Quality Manager will review the register periodically and escalate any matters requiring attention to the relevant Programme Leader and/or the Quality and Standards Committee, as appropriate.

### **Criteria for appointment**

5. Arden University adopts the national criteria for appointment of External Examiners set out in the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter 7: External Examining. Successful candidates to the appointment of External Examiner will normally be able to show appropriate evidence of the following:

#### ***a. Person Specification***

- i) Knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality.
- ii) Competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study, or parts thereof.
- iii) Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate.
- iv) Competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures.

- v) 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.
- i) Familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed.
- vii) Fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in English and the relevant language(s).
- iii) Meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.
- ix) Awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula.
- x) Competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

6. Nominations will also be assessed to identify any conflict of interest which must be resolved prior to and as a condition of appointment. Accordingly Arden University will not appoint as External Examiner anyone in the following categories or circumstances:

***b. Conflicts of interest***

- i) A member of a governing body or committee of the appointing institution or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the appointing institution or one of its collaborative partners.
- ii) Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study.
- iii) Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study.
- iv) Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study.
- v) 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(s) or modules in question.
- vi) Former staff or students of the institution unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s).
- vii) A reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution.
- viii) The succession of an external examiner by a colleague from the examiner's home department and institution.

ix) The appointment of more than one external examiner from the same department of the same institution.

7. In considering nominations, the following items relating to an External Examiner's term of office will be taken into consideration:

***c. Terms of office***

i) The duration of an external examiner's appointment will normally be for four years, with an exceptional extension of one year to ensure continuity.

ii) An external examiner may be reappointed in exceptional circumstances but only after a period of five years or more has elapsed since their last appointment.

iii) External examiners normally hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any point in time.

**Appointment Procedure**

8. Nominations will be made using the External Examiner Nomination Form and must be accompanied by a CV and any other supporting documentation (e.g. evidence of qualifications).

9. Programme Leaders will submit nominations and supporting documentation to the Quality Manager who is responsible for ensuring the receipt and scrutiny of nominations by the Quality and Standards Committee.

10. In making a decision regarding the appointment of an External Examiner, the Quality and Standards Committee will:

- a. Assess the nomination against the criteria for appointment and be satisfied that the nominee meets those criteria. Where a nomination deviates from the criteria, or does not meet all criteria, a rationale for the appointment must be given (and minuted) and any additional support or guidance that may need to be provided to the appointee must also be specified and associated actions recorded in the minutes of the meeting. For example, an appointment from business, industry or the professions may not fulfil the anticipated formal qualifications, but may possess considerable professional experience to make a significant contribution to external examining in the discipline in question. Such appointments will be reported to the Academic Board.
- b. Consider any potential conflict of interest and stipulate if and how this is to be resolved prior to appointment.
- c. Ensure that the appointment does not contravene the criteria relating to terms of office.

11. Quality and Standards Committee Appointment decisions (or rejections) and the associated reasons will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
12. Once an appointment is confirmed, the Quality Manager will ensure that all documentation, including letter of appointment and terms of appointment is issued to the External Examiner and that due briefing and induction takes place in a timely manner.