

REGULATIONS

A3.8 Examination Committees

A3.8.1 Purpose of Examination Committees

The purpose of Examination Committees is – on behalf of the Academic Board - to assess students in accordance with the regulations applying to the programme/s under consideration, and make recommendations for progression or the conferment of academic awards on students who have demonstrated they have met the requirements of the award. They are also responsible for confirming the award of University prizes (see A1.1.14). Examination Committees are a key element in the University's framework for safeguarding the academic standards of its awards.

Key reference points:

- [UK Quality Code \(Section B6: Assessment of students and the accreditation of prior learning\)](#)
- [UK Quality Code \(Section B7: External examining\)](#)
- [Guidance on Examination Committees](#) on the Student Central website

A3.8.2 Appointment of Examination Committees

For every approved programme of study leading to an award of the University there must be an Examination Committee, whose constitution and terms of reference accord with the approved regulations for the programme, and which includes the external examiner/s approved by the University. A single Examination Committee may be responsible for more than one programme of study, and the constitution of the Committee may include provision for the appointment of subsidiary examination committees.

The Examination Committee is appointed by the Academic Board, or a body authorised by it (the Faculty Academic Enhancement & Standards Committee), and is accountable to that body for the fulfilment of its terms of reference.

A3.8.3 Jurisdiction of Examination Committees

When a module and its assessment may contribute to more than one award, the Examination Committee responsible for one of these shall be designated as the one responsible for the assessment concerned and shall award marks or otherwise make judgements about individual candidates' performance. The consequence of these results for the purposes of progression and the award shall be matters for the Examination Committee responsible for the award for which the candidate is registered and subject to the regulations governing that award.

A3.8.4 Membership of Examination Committees

An Examination Committee should, as a minimum, consist of:

- Chair;
- Secretary;
- at least one serving external examiner;
- at least two other members of staff responsible for examining on the programme/s under consideration (the module leaders of all modules being considered by the Examination Committee should be present, if possible).

For collaborative provision, the constitution of the Examination Committee must be set out in the Operations Manual governing the arrangements.

Chairs and Secretaries

Chairs of Examination Committees must be suitably senior and experienced members of University staff. Examination Committee chairs are appointed by the relevant Faculty Academic Enhancement & Standards Committee, acting through delegated authority from the Academic Board. The Chair will normally be the Programme Lead; or other suitable individual, as agreed by the Faculty AESC.

All staff appointed as Examination Committee Chairs and Secretaries must attend one of the compulsory training sessions coordinated by the Directorate of Academic and Student Affairs prior to chairing or acting as secretary at an Examination Committee meeting. All staff are then required to attend the training again within 3 years of their first/last attendance at the training in order to continue to serve as Chair or Secretary. While not compulsory, all Chairs and Secretaries are still expected to attend the bi-annual Examination Committee Briefing in order to remain up to date with ongoing changes to regulations and procedures.

The appointed Liaison Manager must be present at Examination Committees convened to consider students on collaborative programmes. The Liaison Manager may chair the Examination Committee if they are suitably qualified to do so (as stated above).

The Secretary of the Examination Committee will normally be the Programme Administrator for one of the programmes under consideration, as approved by the Faculty Academic Enhancement & Standards Committee. The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that comprehensive and accurate documentation is prepared for consideration by the Committee, and for preparing minutes of the meeting which provide a detailed and accurate record of the Committee's proceedings.

Together, the Examination Committee Chair and Secretary are responsible for managing proceedings, and ensuring due process is followed.

External Examiners

According to the UK Quality Code (chapter B7) published by the Quality Assurance Agency, attendance at Examination Committees is a fundamental aspect of the external examiner's role. An external examiner must be present at all Examination Committees making recommendations for awards (including those convened to consider re-assessments), and no recommendation for the conferment of an award of the University may be made without the written consent (the signing of the awards list) of an approved external examiner.

Students

No student may be a member of an Examination Committee, or attend an examiners' meeting other than as a candidate for assessment. *Internal or external examiners for the programme/s under consideration, who are currently students on a different programme, are not considered as students in this context.*

A3.8.5 Authority of Examination Committees

The Examination Committee is authorised to assess students in accordance with the assessment regulations, including any professional standards, applying to the programme/s of study for which it is responsible, and to recommend the conferment of an award of the University upon a student who, in the judgement of the Committee, has fulfilled the objectives of the approved programme of study and achieved the academic and, where relevant, professional, standard required for the award. An Examination Committee may not award academic credit or recommend awards unless it has evidence of the candidate's achievement of the requirements for the award.

An Examination Committee is responsible for the approval of recommendations for the award of credit for prior learning against the requirements of the programme/s for which it is responsible. See also section A2.5 on Accreditation of Prior Learning.

The approved Examination Committee or its formally constituted subsidiary examination committees (see A3.8.6 below) must be responsible for all assessments that contribute to the recommendation of an *University Regulations/A Core Regulations/A3 Assessment of Students/A3.8 Examination Committees* 2

award within its jurisdiction (see above). No other body has authority to recommend conferment of an award, nor to amend the decision of an approved and properly constituted Examination Committee acting within its terms of reference and in accordance with the regulations for the programme of study. 'Pre-exam committee' meetings may be held in order to ensure that documentation is accurate and complete prior to the formal meeting, but they do not have any formal status (nor do any minutes that may be taken during the pre-meetings) and no decisions can be made by them.

An Examination Committee shall, however, accept a penalty relating to a student's marks or award imposed by a Disciplinary Officer or Misconduct Committee in accordance with the Student Conduct Regulations and Procedure. Any remaining consequences of such a penalty for a student's progression and/or award shall then be determined by an Examination Committee in accordance with the assessment regulations for the programme of study and relevant provisions of these Academic Regulations. An Examination Committee may also be required to review a decision or may have that decision annulled (see section on appeals) and matters referred to it as a result of disagreements with or between external examiners may be decided by the Academic Board.

An Examination Committee has no power to redress a grievance relating to teaching, supervision or guidance unless recommended to do so as consequent upon the substantiation of a complaint under the Student Complaint Procedure.

Any disagreement between internal and external examiners which cannot be resolved by an Examination Committee should be referred to the Chair of the Academic Board for resolution.

A3.8.6 Subsidiary Examination Committees

A subsidiary Examination Committee must include at least one approved external examiner and all such external examiners must be informed that they have the right to attend the meeting of the Examination Committee at which decisions on recommendations for award are made. The rights and duties of such external examiners are the same as those of external examiners on the main Committee except that the subsidiary examination committee makes recommendations to the main Committee only. The approved Examination Committee retains responsibility for judging each student's performance as a whole and deciding, in the light of the objectives of the programme and its assessment regulations, whether any compensation may be allowed for failure in elements of the assessment.

A3.8.7 Delegation of responsibility for assessments

The approved Examination Committee, including external examiners, is also responsible for the reassessment or deferred assessment of students. The Committee may, at the time when it first meets to decide on its recommendations, agree arrangements for delegating that responsibility to a sub-group of itself, which must include at least one external examiner. Such delegation will not be appropriate for all reassessments or deferred assessments; the Committee must be satisfied that it is appropriate in the particular circumstances before agreeing to delegate responsibility.

Chair's Action may be taken to correct an administrative error made by an Examination Committee, but should not be used in other circumstances unless the scope of the delegation to the Chair has been agreed (and minuted) in advance by the committee as a whole.

A3.8.8 Examination Committee minutes

The Examination Committee Chair and Secretary are responsible for producing detailed and accurate records of the Committee's proceedings. Exam committee minutes are the formal record of the University's deliberations and decisions about student progression and awards, and should therefore provide a clear and accurate account of the decisions that have been made by the committee and the reasons behind those decisions. Any prizes awarded to students on the programme/s covered by the Examination Committee should also be recorded in the minutes.

Examination Committee minutes are confidential. For clarity, students should be referred to by both their name and their student number. The minutes are not part of the University's published information, but may be referred to in the case of an appeal against an Examination Committee decision. Minutes and associated documentation should be stored by the Faculty in a secure, but accessible, location for a

period of ten years, after which they should be archived. The retention of awards lists and Chair's Action forms is the responsibility of Student Central.

Further guidance on the production of Examination Committee minutes can be found in the template.

For further information about these regulations, please contact the Academic Registrar.

Approved by:

Academic Enhancement & Standards Committee, 27 June 2012

Academic Board, 18 July 2012

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Information about the review of and appeal against a decision of an examination committee can be found in Section C.