

# Academic Policies and Procedures



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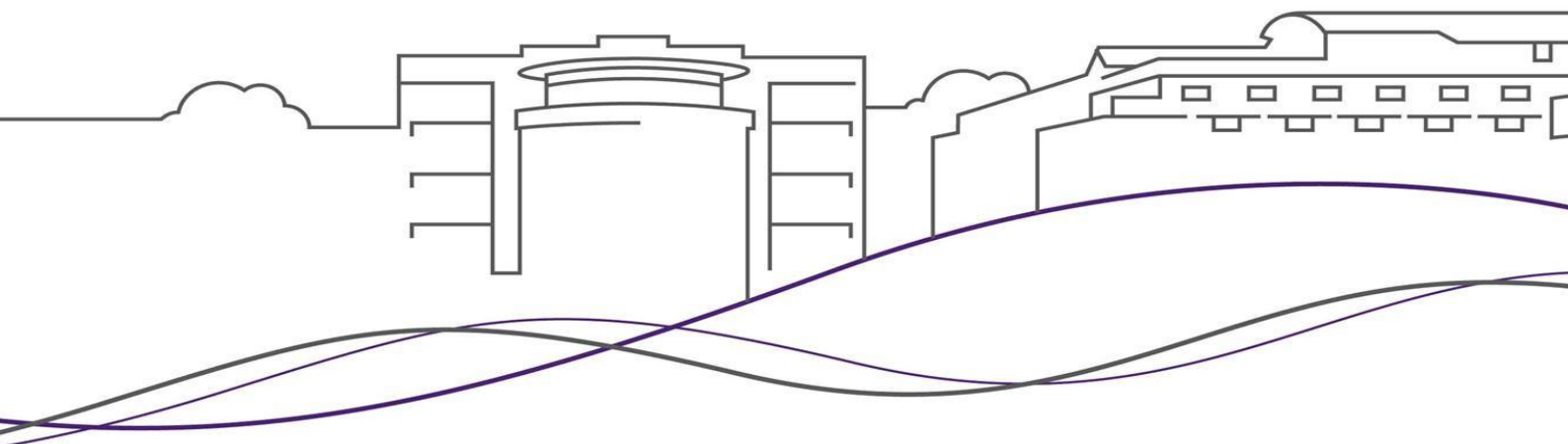
South Devon College

HIGHER EDUCATION

## (HECRP2) EXTERNAL EXAMINERS: SELECTION, APPROVAL AND APPOINTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE v5.0

For SDC Awards

For UoP Awards follow this [link](#)



# Document Control

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# External Examiners: Selection, Approval and Appointment Policy and Procedure

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South Devon College considers its arrangements for external examining to be an integral and important part of its quality assurance system and is committed to ensuring the presence of at least one independent and appropriately qualified external representative examiner on each of its Examination Panels and Boards.

The primary aims of the College's external examining system are to ensure:

- (i) It is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for its awards in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications, applicable subject benchmark statements and, where appropriate, with the requirements of relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.
- (ii) The assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme(s) and is conducted in line with South Devon College's policies and regulations.
- (iii) The academic standards and the achievements of students are, notwithstanding variations in course content, comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the External Examiners have experience.
- (iv) The quality of the learning opportunities provided to students on its programmes and courses are enhanced.
- (v) Good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment is developed.

## **Nomination of External Examiners**

- 1 Nominations for the appointment of External Examiners are the responsibility of the relevant Academic Sections
- 2 Nominations for the appointment of External Examiners must be submitted to the HE Faculty Office for approval 12 months prior to commencement of role
- 3 Nominations should be submitted on the standard form provided by the HE Faculty Office (see below).

## Criteria for the suitability of External Examiners

- Panels and Boards must include at least one External Examiner from outside the College.
- South Devon College will continue to apply the national criteria for the appointment of External Examiners set out in the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Chapter B7 External Examining). Whilst we acknowledge this QAA Chapter has been replaced, there is no other indicator to reference <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>

## Person Specification

External Examiners should be able to show appropriate evidence of

- 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;
- vi. 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 the relevant language(s) (unless other secure arrangements are in place to ensure that External Examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements);
- viii. meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory and 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.
- Where the nominee has no previous experience as an External Examiner for any institution, the appointment should, wherever possible, be made to a team of External Examiners and/or with agreement that a more experienced External Examiner will act as a mentor.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

- To avoid any conflict of interest, anyone in the following categories or circumstances should not be appointed as an External Examiner:
  - 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 South Devon College 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.

- Nominees who have been employed as an external reader in the approval of a programme are not automatically debarred from immediate appointment as an External Examiner to that programme. However, Sections should balance the benefits of engaging someone who is familiar with the programme and its rationale with any risk to their ability to provide a fully independent perspective.
- External Examiners are required to inform South Devon College as soon as possible should any conflict of interest arise during their term of office.
- Exceptionally, an External Examiner could be considered where they are currently undertaking EE duties for a programme that is migrating to UCSD approval

### **Terms of office**

- The duration of an External Examiner's appointment will be for four years, extensions will not be granted other than in exceptional circumstances, and then for no longer than one year to ensure continuity where a programme is being brought to an end.
- 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.
- External Examiners may normally hold no more than two External Examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any point in time, (thereby not exceeding 480 credits).
- The Appointment shall commence on .....and shall continue until either party terminates the contract by giving to the other not less than three months' notice in writing.

### **Exemptions to the criteria**

- Exemptions from the criteria will only be approved where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. In these instances, a fully argued case should be made by the Assistant Principal on the nomination form.

### **Approval of nominations**

Nominations should be submitted to the Deputy Head of HE, who will refer them to the Ratification Panel for approval and subsequent reporting to EE Sub Group. While a Section Head should seek the nominee's agreement in order to put his/her name forward, under no circumstances should a commitment to an appointment be

made in advance of the decision of the Ratification Panel or of its Chair on its behalf.

The Ratification Panel is made up of:

- a) The Head of Higher Education and Academic Registrar or his or her representative (chair)
- b) Vice Principal People and Resources
- c) Deputy Head of Higher Education Academic Standards

## **Induction of External Examiners**

On confirmation of their appointment, all External Examiners will receive a letter of appointment stating:

- i. The award bearing programme(s) for which they have been appointed;
- ii. The period of appointment and starting date;
- iii. If more than one External Examiner is appointed to the programme, an explanation of the roles assigned to each appointee;
- iv. The fee they should receive and an explanation of South Devon College position with regard to the deduction of tax at source, etc;
- v. A request for their NI number;
- vi. A specification that attendance at Panels and Boards (as appropriate) and the submission of an annual written report be a condition of appointment and payment;
- vii. The ways in which the College will make use of their personal data, including any comments they make about the performance of students, either individually or generally in their reports and, in particular, that their name, position and institution will be included within student handbooks;
- viii. An explanation that, if they so wish, they may, in the case of serious concerns make a separate, confidential report to the Vice Principal

The following information will also be included with the letter of appointment:

- i. A copy of the previous External Examiner's report (where applicable)
- ii. An extract from the Assessment Regulations setting out the role and duties of the Subject Assessment Panel or Award Assessment Board.



- iii. A link to South Devon College web pages setting out details of its external examination processes
- iv. South Devon College's guidance on the appointment, roles and responsibilities of External Examiners.
- v. Student regulations.
- vi. A copy of the programme specification.
- vii. A copy of the student handbook.
- viii. Travel expenses claim form

## External Examiner Nomination Form

Section A-C to be completed by nominee

Section D-F to be completed by South Devon College

Sections A-C should be forwarded to the nominee for completion. Before doing so, the nominator should check whether the nominee is likely to meet the eligibility criteria set out above.

### Section A - Nominee details

Programme title	
Full name and title	
Current place of work	
Position within the Institution	
Address for correspondence (if different from above)	
Email address	
Daytime telephone number	

### Section B - Eligibility

	Y/N
Are you a member of a governing body or committee or a current employee of South Devon College?	
Do you have a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with any member of staff or student involved in the programme?	
Are you required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme?	
Will you be in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme?	
Are you significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with any member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or course(s) in question?	
<i>If the answer to any of the above questions is 'yes' it will not be possible to approve the nomination</i>	

Are you a former member of staff or student of the institution <sup>1</sup> ?	
Have you been employed as an Academic Advisor in the approval or validation of the programme <sup>2</sup> ?	
Are there any other possible conflicts of interest not covered by the above?	
<i>If you have answered "Yes" to either of these questions, please provide further information (with dates) below:</i>	

### Section C – Experience

	Y/N
Are you familiar with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, Foundation Degree Characteristic Statement, applicable subject benchmark statements and, where appropriate, with the requirements of relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies?	

<i>Please give details of:</i>
Current and previous External Examiner appointments in UK and overseas (giving institution, programme title, level and period of tenure) <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Former members of staff or students of the institution should not be employed unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with them have completed their programme.

<sup>2</sup> Nominees who have been employed as an external reader in the approval of a programme are not automatically debarred from immediate appointment as an External Examiner to that programme. However, nominators should balance the benefits of engaging someone who is familiar with the programme and its rationale with any risk to their ability to provide a fully independent perspective.

<sup>3</sup> External Examiners may normally hold no more than two appointments for programmes / modules at any point in time.

Qualifications (certified and experiential and in particular those relating to your role of External Examiner)

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Summary of your internal assessment experience in the last ten years

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Section D-F to be completed by South Devon College

### Section D - Appointment Details

Nominator (Section Head)	
Programme title(s) which the External Examiner will serve:	
Year & Month of commencement	
Duration of appointment	
Confirmation of nominees status	
Is this a new programme or is this a replacement to an existing External Examiner?	
If this is a replacement appointment, please give the name and institution of the current External Examiner <sup>4</sup>	
Does the nominee have previous experience of external examining?	
If no, please give rationale	

### Section E - Supporting statement

Please address the merits of the proposed appointment in the context of the resulting balance of expertise and experience in the examining team and with particular reference to the person specification (above)
Signature: Role:

**Once signed, please return completed forms to:**

HE Faculty Office, University Centre, South Devon College, Long Road, Paignton TQ4 7EJ. Please also email a copy to [amyjojaycock@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:amyjojaycock@southdevon.ac.uk)

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<sup>4</sup> An External Examiner may not be succeeded by a colleague from the same home department and institution.

## Section F - Ratification

Confirmation from the Ratification Panel of eligibility and suitability to become an External Examiner
Chair Signature: Role:

## Section F - Remuneration

External Examiners should be remunerated in respect of each Panel or Board to which they are attached:

No of students on programme	
Number of meetings	
Full fee £400	Y/N
Mentoring	
£150 Offering general advice to a new External Examiner without previous experience in the role in the first year of the new examiner's term of office.	Y/N

## REVISION HISTORY

Ver	Date	Author	Description
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