

21 October 2024

Dear External Examiner,

Re: External Examiners overseeing standards in the 2024/25 academic session

I am writing to thank you for undertaking External Examiner duties at the University of Sussex in the 2024/25 academic session. We really value the commitment of our External Examiners, which enables us to ensure we are delivering to the highest academic standards. I would like to thank those of you who undertook External Examiner duties at the University of Sussex in the 2023/24 academic session and to welcome External Examiners who are new to the University in 2024/25. I thank you all in advance for your contribution to the quality assurance of our course portfolio.

Progression and Award Regulations

The Progression and Award Regulations were reviewed and have been published for 2024/25. Comments provided by External Examiners and Progression and Award Board (PAB) Chairs were taken into consideration as part of the review, which sought to streamline the regulations. You can access the regulations, and a summary of the changes made for 2024/25 on our webpages (please see 'Useful documents' below).

Induction for External Examiners

You will soon be sent a separate invitation to the External Examiner Induction, which will take place on Friday, 21st February 2025.

Electronic Submissions

The University of Sussex online submission system enables electronic submission of work by students and electronic marking and feedback by academic staff. It is used for all suitable text-based assessments. Where an assessment has been set up for e-submission, a sample will be automatically generated for you to review remotely. This should benefit External Examiners completing external moderation where the timescale is short before the PAB. Instructions and log in details to access the system will be provided separately along with information on resources available to support you.

Feedback on External Examiner Reports

I attach for your information the [summary of undergraduate External Examiner reports for 2023/24](#) and actions agreed by the University to address the institutional issues raised. The summary and actions were agreed at the University Education Committee and will be considered further at Annual Course Review. You will separately receive an individual Action Plan from the Chair of the School Progression and Award Board. This will set out actions agreed by the School Education Committee to address the school-level issues that you raised in your report.

Please be advised that for 2024/25 you will need to complete the report template provided at:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/externalexaminers>

Please note that if you have a serious concern relating to academic standards you should raise this directly with the PVC for Education and Students. As a last resort, if the concern has not been resolved and relates to a systematic issue rather than a one-off case of ineffective practice, you may raise the matter externally with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

Role of the External Examiner and attendance at the University

The Academic Quality and Partnerships (AQP) office have provided some FAQs on the role of the External Examiner. These FAQs are published on our web pages (please see 'Useful documents' below for the link). At the end of each academic year, you will be asked to complete a report. External Examiner reports are published on our web pages and are available to staff, students and External Examiners.

In addition to the External Examiner induction, you will be invited to attend a University briefing on the assessment regulations and how these are applied across the University. These briefings are usually held immediately prior to the PAB meetings. An invite will be sent to you nearer the time.

In relation to attendance at the University, please note that a key part of the role is to attend an annual meeting with students. Schools will therefore be contacting you to discuss an appropriate time to meet with students. This may coincide with Induction or the Progression and Award Board.

Useful documents

The Handbook on the Policy and Procedures for the External Examining of Taught Courses 2024/25 is available at:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/externalexaminers>

Frequently Asked Questions, to support External Examiners in the role are available at:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/externalexaminers/eefaq>

The University's Progression and Award Regulations for 2024/25 are available via the link below. The regulations are available at:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment>

The Degree Outcomes Statement 2022 gives an overview of our award outcomes. In due course we will also send you our Annual Degree Outcomes Report which provides a more detailed analysis.

The [External Examiner Guide to support Moderation](#) summarises the requirements for moderation.

It is now possible for you to forward your Sussex email to your home institution email address – please follow the instructions in this [guide to email forwarding](#). Alternatively, if you use Outlook, you can set up an additional email account for your Sussex email, by using the 'add account' function. This [guide to adding an account](#) will take you step by step through the process.

Appendix 1 sent with this letter, sets out the timeframe for external moderation and for Progression and Award Boards (PABs) in 2024/25. The Deputy Chair of the PAB will be in touch with you shortly, if

s/he hasn't already, to confirm the specific date and time for the PAB that you are asked to attend this year.

I would like to thank you for your continued support and commitment to the University. I look forward to meeting you, if I haven't already, at the induction event in February or later in the year.

Kind regards,



Professor Kate O'Riordan
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)

CC: Chair of the PAB (undergraduate/postgraduate)
Executive Dean
Head of School
Chair of Board of Study
Director of Teaching and Learning
Senior Education Manager
School Administrator