



UNIVERSITY PRINCIPAL EXTERNAL EXAMINER

Purpose of the Position

In accordance with the expectations of Quality Council for UK Higher Education (QCUK) and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), the University appoints a suitably qualified and experienced senior academic, to provide external scrutiny, assurance and advice in relation to its ongoing internal institutional consideration of degree classifications and other outcomes for students.

By participating in governing bodies and groupings which review student outcomes, the Principal External examiner (PEE) contributes to the University's annual review of overarching data and analysis on degree classifications and other student outcomes metrics, primarily continuation, completion and progression. This includes how such data are presented publicly, for example in the form of a Degree Outcomes Statement, and action taken internally in response any trends highlighted.

The PEE also contributes to the ongoing review and analysis of the University's assessment, progression and awarding practices, by participating in the University Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (UAPAC). In doing so they have oversight of the policies for making undergraduate and postgraduate taught awards, together with measures to maintain the credibility and sector comparability of such awards.

The role of PEE complements and enhances the work already undertaken by module and programme level External Examiners in setting and maintaining academic standards. Together they provide external assurance of that assessment, progression and awarding practices are transparent, reliable and fair and contribute to successful outcomes for all students.

Appointment

Given the significance of the role, the appointment of the PEE is overseen by a panel comprising the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience), the Dean for Taught Students, Director of Teaching Excellence & Enhancement and an Associate Dean for Taught Students (Racial Equality and Inclusion). The appointment will subsequent be reported to the Education Board.

The appointee should:

- Currently hold, or recently (in the last three years) have held an academic appointment at professorial level in a UK Higher Education Institution;

- Have significant experience in the management of academic quality and standards, and preferably of work to assure successful outcomes for all students, at either institutional or faculty (or equivalent) levels;
- Not have held an External Examiner or Advisor's post at the University of Exeter for at least five years; and
- Be able to provide evidence of their right to work in the UK.

The appointment will also be subject to the normal criteria required for External Examiners or Advisors at the University which may be found in Section 2.1, Chapter 2 of the [External Examining Handbook](#) of the University's [Teaching Quality Assurance Manual](#).

The appointment will initially be for a period of three years, with the potential for extension of up to two further years, if mutually agreeable.

Role and Responsibilities

In relation to the Degree Outcomes Statement, to conduct an annual desk-top review of the following documentation, which will be provided by the University:

- Annual Undergraduate Degree Classifications Report;
- Draft Degree Outcomes Statement;
- Papers presented to Education Board and Senate
- Policies and procedures underpinning undergraduate assessment, progression and awarding, including degree classification algorithms;
- Outcomes of any recent internal projects or developments to ensure success for all, maintain the integrity of Exeter degrees or further research and analysis.

To produce a short annual report, using a simple standard template, summarising their engagement in the University's internal institutional review of degree classifications and academic outcomes for students, providing external assurance of the content of the Degree Outcomes Statement and raising further questions or making recommendations for the University's to consider to further develop and enhance its work in this area.

The report of the University Principal External Examiner will accompany the Degree Outcomes Statement when presented to Council for sign off prior to publication and will help to provide assurance that the relevant expectations of the QCUK and QAA are being met.

The recommendations will be considered by, and guide the work of, the University APAC and Success for All Governance Groups.

In relation to student outcomes more generally, to attend meetings, either in-person or virtually, which will include some or all of the following, subject to negotiation and availability:

- Meetings (up to four per year) as a core member of the UAPAC;
- Meetings, as required, with the Dean for Taught Students and Director of Teaching Excellence and Enhancement; and
- Meetings, as required, relating to the University's work to enhance the curriculum and ensure successful outcomes for all students.

Support for the role will be provided by the University's Education Policy, Quality and Standards (EPQS) Team within Learning Experiences and Innovation (LXI) and the Principal External Examiner will be provided with a named contact for this purpose.

Remuneration

An honorarium of £1500 and expenses will be payable annually on receipt of the PEE's report on the Degree Outcomes Statement.

Further information

More information on the University's approach to this area of work can be found here:

[Degree Outcomes Statement | About us | University of Exeter](#)

[Success for All | Success for All | University of Exeter](#)

[Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook | Teaching Quality Assurance Manual | University of Exeter](#)

Guidance on expectations, content and publication of Degree Outcomes Statements, the underpinning process of internal institutional review and approaches to degree classification can be found here:

[QCUK/QAA Degree Classification Transparency, Reliability and Fairness - A Statement of Intent](#)

[QSUK/QAA Guidance for Awarding Bodies on Producing Degree Outcomes Statements](#)

[QCUK/QAA Checklist for Considering and Validating Degree Outcomes Statements](#)

Updated by Education Policy, Quality and Standards, in consultation with the Dean for Taught Students and Director of Teaching Excellence and Enhancement.

October 2024