

## **EXTERNAL EXAMINER APPOINTMENTS – Guidance Notes for Faculty Quality Administrators and CASQE Staff**

Nomination forms (available via the external examiner web site at <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/academic/examiner.php>) were revised in May 2010 in preparation for alignment with new arrangements and examiner roles required for the **tiered assessment board structure**, operational with effect from summer 2012.

The nomination template for new examiners (EE1) was also updated to ensure that information relevant to the **new employee status of external examiners** is captured to comply with the requirements of the Asylum and Immigration Act. The form is now in four parts and part two of the form must now be completed by the nominee and signed off as such by the Head of Department.

A request for Faculties to provide **details of examiner fees** (in line with the financial precepts for the payment of external examiners) was added to all nomination templates and points of clarification were added to sections throughout the form to assist completion.

Please note: the function and title of the templates remain unchanged from previous versions – it is the content that has been adjusted.

When preparing nominations for FADCs and when considering nominations at FADC meetings, please bear the following in mind:

- ALL sections of nomination forms must be completed – if there is no relevant information for a section, the word “none” should be used rather than “not applicable”.
- CVs should NOT be attached. The information required must be incorporated into the nomination form.

The *Procedures for the Submission of Nominations* document was updated in May 2010, and was circulated to Faculties and CASQE officers for information during the summer term 2011 together with details of how to access the revised nomination templates.

### **EE1 – For New External Examiners**

The form is now in four parts. Part one is prepared by the faculty/department and then the template is sent to the nominee for completion of part two. Part two must be completed by the nominee as there is a statement within there relating to the right to work in the UK.

On completion of part two, the nominee should return the form, at which point the Head of Department signs to confirm completion in part three. Part three is also used to record FADC consideration and approval (minute number to be provided).

The form should then be sent through to CASQE for Institutional scrutiny, and if approved it is signed off in part four by the Head of the Centre for Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement.

#### **PART ONE**

##### **Box 2 – Examiner Type**

Within the tiered board structure examiners are no longer considered to be appointed to specific programmes. The revised structure comprises two types of assessment boards:

- Unit Results Boards – to which Subject External Examiners are appointed.
- Progression/Award Boards – to which Award External Examiners are appointed.

In exceptional circumstances, for which permission for variation must be sought from the Academic Standards sub-Committee, examiners might be appointed to a different role where the assessment board structure is non standard eg to comply with PSRB requirements (indicated on the template by the term Non-Standard External Examiner). If an examiner is to be nominated in this category check that the variation has been approved.

Please tick only one “examiner type” box – and make sure that details of the assessment board they will attend are included. This is needed for the central examiners database.

The role of Chief External Examiner does not exist in the new structure, but programme teams should identify one subject examiner to have oversight of the coherence of the units within the programme.

Subject(s) to be examined. Simply provide details of the disciplines covered – there is no need to provide detail of the precise units to be covered. This information should be recorded in the unit specification and input to that form by the unit leader on examiner approval.

Please make sure that information on the annual fee payable is included in this section of the template. This information is needed for the contractual letter of appointment.

#### Box 3 – Proposed period of tenure

Normally September (eg 2011) to December four years later (ie 2015).

#### Box 4 – Examiner to be replaced

Check that the nominee is not from the same workplace as the examiner to be replaced. The examiner to be replaced will normally dovetail appointments with the replacement ie for the period September to December.

#### Box 5 – Current Team of External Examiners

Should include details of ALL the external examiners currently appointed, including the one who is to be replaced by the nomination under consideration.

The final column should provide the dates of the period of appointment eg September 2011 – December 2015, NOT the date that the appointment was made.

## **PART TWO**

Must be completed by the nominee

#### Box 6 – Details of Examiner

External examiners will become employees of the University on appointment and it is important that nominees are aware of this and can consider any implications the status might have for their own other employment or pension rights etc. In accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act external examiners must be eligible to work in the UK and must declare this on the nomination form. On appointment, normally at the first visit to the University, examiners will be required to have this checked – usually by presenting a passport or other official document (details available from Human Resources) for verification – prior to payment. Please make sure that the nominee can confirm the right to work in the UK.

### Box 8 – Employment

Only provide information for the last 10 years. Make sure that the current (or most recent) appointment is listed first. This should be the same as the details provided in Box 6.

NB: In terms of currency of expertise, a statement is included in the MMU External Examining Code of Practice and Regulations to make explicit that experience should be “current or recent (within three years)”. CASQE scrutiny of nominations looks at currency as it relates to appropriateness and it is expected that nominees will have current or recent experience of UK HE.

### Box 9 – Experience as External Examiner/Current External Examiner appointments

If there is none, the Programme Team should provide details of mentoring to be put in place. Under these circumstances the nominee, if appointed, will normally be required to undertake a University Induction.

If there are other current appointments, check that the workload will not be too great.

Check that the nominee has not acted as external examiner at MMU in the past 10 years.

### Box 10 – Other relevant experience

See above (in Box 8) for guidance on expectations relating to currency of experience.

Check that the nominee has not been an employee at MMU in the past 10 years.

### Box 12 – Details of association

These are only necessary if likely to compromise impartiality.

NB It is OK to nominate individuals who have previously served on PARM panels;

It is OK for departments to nominate an individual for their UG programmes who is from the same institution as an external on their PG programmes and vice versa.

It is NOT OK to nominate individuals from the same institution to serve on the same programme (check Box 14 for this) except for large multi-disciplinary teams.

### Box 14 – Authorisation

Check that the nomination has been signed and dated by the HOD, who is also confirming that the nominee has completed part two of the form. The Chair of FADC should authorise the nomination following consideration by FADC. Chair’s Action to approve nominations on behalf of FADC should only be taken when urgent approval is required. The action should be reported to the next meeting of FADC.

In instances where the Chair of FADC is also a Head of Department, paperwork emanating from that department and requiring signatures from both post/role holders will be processed as follows. The individual concerned will authorise the paperwork in their capacity as Head of Department/Section. Following consideration and approval by FADC, another senior member of FADC, preferably a Head of another Department, or a nominated deputy FADC Chair should sign on behalf of FADC.

## Box 15 – Institutional Approval

Should be left blank

### **EE1A – Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**

EE1A (Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form) should be completed by the nominee when completing part two of the nomination proforma. It should NOT be included in the paperwork for FADC meetings (to ensure that the process is not compromised). EE1A is only used in conjunction with EE1 (New External Examiners nomination proforma). Completion of EE1A is not compulsory at the moment.

EE1A MUST be separated from EE1 prior to consideration by FADCs and then matched up again before submitting to CASQE for approval. Once it reaches CASQE it is logged onto the separate Equal Opportunities database and the nomination is considered separately.

## **EE2 – Reallocation of Duties**

Should not be used to extend periods of approval – use EE3 for this.

Much of the guidance provided for consideration of EE1 is applicable to the corresponding sections of this proforma and EE3. It is not necessary for the examiner to complete any section of this proforma as the information required will have been previously provided on EE1 and can be completed by faculty/departmental staff.

Comments specific to EE2 are as follows:

### **Box 2 - Examiner Type**

This box has been revised to clarify details of the re-allocation. Make sure that both sections ie “currently appointed” and “following re-allocation” areas are fully completed. This section subsumes the old section 6 “re-allocation of duties”.

### **Box 4 - Details of Examiner**

Make sure that details of the current annual fee are provided, and details of an adjusted figure if the re-allocation necessitates this.

### **Box 5 – Current External Examiner appointments**

Make sure that the MMU appointment is listed.

In the final column, the dates of the periods of appointment eg September 2011 – December 2015, should be given.

### **Box 6 – Rationale for proposal**

Should be convincing eg to extend responsibility to cover new developments within the same discipline, or to reallocate to better balance the student numbers across the examining team etc.

### **Box 7 – Current Team of External Examiners**

Should include the examiner whose duties are to be reallocated.

## **EE3 – Extension of Period of Appointment**

This is only approved in exceptional circumstances eg the programme only has one more year to run; another member of the team suddenly resigns or has their appointment terminated; the external has been involved in a development and it would be helpful for their input in implementation etc. NB if an examiner is to have their period of appointment extended and the duties extended an EE2 and EE3 will be required.

With relatively new programmes, it is sometimes necessary to use this method to stagger the periods of appointment as the first cohort of external examiners will all expire at the same point.

It is not necessary for the examiner to complete any section of this proforma as the information required will have been previously provided on EE1 and can be completed by faculty/departmental staff.

### **Box 4 - Details of Examiner**

Make sure that details of the current annual fee are provided, and details of an adjusted figure if appropriate.

### **Box 6 – Rationale for Request**

Must be convincing – see above. Make sure that the duration of extension requested is given. This should normally not be longer than 12 months.

## **Nomination Process for Taught Research Programmes**

The nominations process for taught research programmes (ie MRes and Part A of the Professional Doctorate) is identical to the process for all other taught programmes, but the paperwork is processed via the RED office and the proformas are re-titled TREE1, TREE1A, TREE2, TREE3. These are available via the external examiners web site. The paperwork will not be processed via FADCs, but via the Research Degrees sub-Committee.

UPDATED: May 2011