



**Global Banking School**  
**+44 (0) 207 539 3548**  
[info@globalbanking.ac.uk](mailto:info@globalbanking.ac.uk)  
[www.globalbanking.ac.uk](http://www.globalbanking.ac.uk)  
**891 Greenford Road, London**  
**UB6 0HE**

## **GBS External Examiners Policy**

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| <b>GBS Related policies</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GBS Policy Development, Approval, Review, Publication and Communication Policy</i></li> </ul>  |
| <b>External Reference</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance: <a href="#">External Expertise</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Fundamentals of External Examining (2019) by Advance HE</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">QAA subject benchmark statements</a></li> </ul> |

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## **GBS External Examiners Policy**

### **1. Policy Statement**

- 1.1. The UK Quality Code requires providers to seek external, impartial, and independent academic and/or professional expertise ensuring that the standards and quality of courses and its awards cohere with the relevant National Qualifications Framework, Subject Benchmark Statements, Characteristic Statements.
- 1.2. GBS uses external expertise to identify good practice in learning, teaching and assessment, areas for enhancement that inform the continuous improvement of the quality of courses on offer.

### **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. The purpose of the External Examiners Policy is to provide a framework for GBS's practice in relation to all aspects of external examining in assuring the awards meet national standards and sector expectations as relevant.
- 2.2. The policy sets out the roles and responsibilities GBS assigns to its External Examiners for all taught programmes.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1. This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes delivered by GBS.
- 3.2. External examining is carried out on all taught programmes at Levels 5, 6 and 7.

### **4. Roles and Responsibilities of External Examiners**

- 4.1. The principal role of External Examiners at GBS is to determine whether the standard of academic work undertaken by students of GBS is comparable to similar programmes at other higher education institutions and safeguard the academic integrity. This is achieved by testing the robustness of the assessment processes, ascertaining that students are treated fairly within these processes, and by reporting systematically and objectively to the relevant faculty.
- 4.2. The External Examiners are required to make a set of *core judgements* which will assist the programme team in:
  - verifying by reference to acceptable indicators (*for example, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and subject benchmark statements*) that the academic standard set for each award is appropriate to its level;

- confirming that, in measuring the standard of student achievement in each award, it is comparable with other higher education institutions offering an award at the same level;
- determining that congruence between the stated learning outcomes of each programme and its assessment methods is maintained;
- ensuring that all aspects of the assessment process are conducted fairly, consistently, and accurately in accordance with programme and school's regulations.

4.3. In addition, the external examiners will be required to review the robustness of the assessment process and

- confirm the proposed marks and awards presented to the assessment boards and progression boards;
- moderate a representative sample of internally marked work of an agreed size and in accordance with the GBS's assessment procedures – this can be carried out in batches, through mid-year moderation, or at the end of the assessment cycle;
- comment on all assessments sampled (including examination papers), and practical assignments such as dissertations, extended essays, or projects in advance of completion of the assessment;
- attend a minimum of one Assessment Board per academic year. Where scheduling of Assessment Boards will cause difficulties for an External Examiner to attend (either virtually or in person), the External Examiner should liaise in a timely manner to explore whether alternative scheduling could be arranged;
- observe students in their practice where appropriate to ensure placements is conducted in line with the requirements of the professional and regulatory bodies;
- review and confirm the recommendations of the assessment board by signing the mark sheets presented at the board – if externals do not agree with the recommendations, they should inform GBS's Academic Registrar and/or the Academic Standards and Quality Office of the reasons;
- produce annual report on standards of student performance and how they compare with the sector, fairness of assessment methods, equity of treatment for students, accuracy and consistency of internal marking;

- contribute to the ongoing development and enhancement of the provision through feedback and dialogue with the team;
- scrutinise documentation related to recognition of prior learning where applicable
- monitor and report on the standards set by GBS for its awards in the subject area concerned in comparison with those of other institutions.

## **5. Nomination and Appointment**

5.1. Nominees for External Examiner should meet the criteria and avoid conflicts of interest, as set out below.

5.2. External Examiners are nominated by the relevant Programme Committee and nominations should be submitted to the Academic Standards and Quality Office who will scrutinise in the first instance to determine whether the nominee meets the criteria and/or additional information is required. Suitable nominations will then be referred to the Chair of the Academic Board and subsequent reporting to the Academic Board for approval.

5.3. External Examiners may be drawn from a wide range of academics or professional contexts to ensure that the course benefits from a breadth of knowledge and expertise. Nominees who do not fulfil all the criteria *per se* may be appointed provided that appropriate arrangements are put in place to support the external examiner with exception.

## **6. Criteria for appointing External Examiners**

6.1. The following criteria are considered when appointing the External Examiners (PSRBs requirements must also be considered, where applicable).

6.2. Nominees for External Examiner should demonstrate:

- Experience in teaching the same discipline and at the same level as the subject being assessed;
- Experience of external examining in higher education for at least 2 years in a UK University;
- Knowledge and understanding of current principles and practices in maintaining academic standards, quality assurance and enhancement and methods of assessment;

- Competence and experience, and have continuing engagement in the relevant field(s) of study and show awareness of current developments in the design, delivery and examining of the relevant curricula;
- Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive industry experience where appropriate;
- Competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures;
- Familiarity with the UK FHEQs and other relevant professional standards expected for the award;
- Excellent understanding of the relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs);
- Competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience;

6.3. On exception, a strong rationale should be provided by the programme team for nominee with no previous experience of external examining, outlining the arrangements that will be put in place to ensure they are mentored by appropriate External Examiner within the established team.

## **7. Workload**

7.1. Nominees for External Examiner who are already engaged in more than two current external examinerships should not be considered or appointed.

7.2. In programmes with larger cohort of students, the appointment of an additional External Examiner will be considered. The faculty will negotiate and agree with the External Examiner to manage the workload as guided by the sampling method.

## **7. Conflicts of Interest**

8.1. External Examiners must be wholly impartial and independent of GBS, its staff, governing body and relevant partners. Individuals in any of the following categories should not be appointed as External Examiners at GBS.

- A current member of the governing body or committee, employee or affiliated with one of its partner institutions;
- Anyone who had been staff member or student of GBS unless a period of five years has elapsed;

- Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student at GBS;
- Anyone who is succeeding an outgoing External Examiner from the same department in the same institution;
- Anyone who has acted previously as External Examiner at GBS unless a period of five years has elapsed.

8.2. Once appointed, the External Examiner must keep GBS informed of any changes in circumstances that may give rise to a conflict of interest.

## **8. Termination of appointment**

8.1. GBS can terminate an External Examiner's appointment at any time where the External Examiner is deemed not to have fulfilled his/her obligations or if a conflict of interest arises which cannot be satisfactorily resolved.

8.2. External Examiners who wish to resign before the end of their normal term of office must inform the Academic Standards and Quality Office or the Dean of the Faculty in writing. The External Examiners must give at least three months' notice of their intention to resign to allow sufficient time for a replacement to be found.

## **9. Terms of office**

9.1. External Examiners are appointed for a period of four years. Extensions are typically granted only in exceptional cases for which the programme team are required to provide a rationale to be considered by the Academic Board. Extensions will not normally be made for longer than one academic year.

9.2. For a 5<sup>th</sup> exceptional year, the nomination must be approved by the Academic Board as per any other nomination request, with the exception that the memo to the Chair of the Academic Board should clearly explain the rationale for the additional year.

9.3. External Examiners may request to temporarily cease their appointment, for a period of no more than one academic cycle, for example due to illness or maternity leave. In these circumstances another External Examiner will be sought to temporarily cover the absence.

9.4. The period of temporary absence will not be counted for the four-year duration of the appointment. The external Examiner should liaise with the Academic Standards and Quality Office and the relevant faculty to agree the period of absence so that arrangements for a temporary replacement can be made. The temporary cessation of appointment and replacement must be approved by the Academic Board.



9.5. External Examiners appointments are made at the start of the academic year, and it is the responsibility of the Programme Committee, nominating the External Examiner to ensure that External Examiners are in place at the beginning of the assessment cycle.

## **10. Mentoring**

- 10.1. Any new External Examiner will be allocated a mentor in the first year of appointment at GBS.
- 10.2. The Academic Standards and Quality Office will arrange a mentor for the new External Examiner and introduce the new External Examiner and the mentor to each other via email.
- 10.3. The mentor is expected to be prepared to offer general advice, either by phone or email.
- 10.4. The type of issues that they might be asked to offer guidance could include: dealing with draft examination papers; moderating and commenting on assessment; offering advice to the Assessment Board; completion of the annual report; as well as general discussions about external examining experiences and common scenarios that may arise.
- 10.5. If a proposed External Examiner has not undertaken the role before, mentoring will be provided to support to enable them to fulfil their role effectively. In addition, a designated individual from the Academic Standards and Quality Office will provide guidance as required and arrange peer support and other mutually agreed supports from internal and external expertise.

## **11. Briefing External Examiners**

- 11.1. Once a nomination is approved, a letter of appointment is issued by the Academic Standards and Quality Office to the candidate accompanied by relevant GBS's policies and procedures.
- 11.2. The Dean in consultation with a designated member of ASQO is responsible for ensuring that new External Examiners are briefed on specific subject area or programme which they will examine.
- 11.3. The briefing will be organised by the Academic Standards and Quality Office normally via online, however alternative arrangement can be made (for example on site meeting) as required.

## **12. Annual Report**

12.1. External Examiners are required to produce a written report annually after the last relevant Assessment Board or Progression and Award Board. However, they may submit additional reports at any time as required. Reports must be returned within six weeks of attendance at the last Board meeting to the Academic Standards and Quality Office.

12.2. Reports are considered at the Programme Committee and during the relevant annual monitoring exercise and are included in Course Validation and Re-Validation documents.

### **13. Monitoring and Review**

13.1. The policy will be reviewed annually by the Academic Standards and Quality Office and/or as in needed.

### **14. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

14.1. GBS is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a Data Controller. Details of the School's registration are published on the Information Commissioners website. GBS as a Data Controller shall implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure that processing of personal information is performed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

### **15. Alternative Format**

15.1. This policy can be provided in alternative formats (including large print, audio and electronic) upon request. For further information, or to make a request, please contact:

- **Name:** Student Welfare Management Team
- **Position:** Head of Student Welfare
- **Email:** [welfare@globalbanking.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@globalbanking.ac.uk)