



**Northumbria University – External Examiner
Assessor Policy**

Ref: PL.064-v003

Brief Description & Purpose:	The External Examiner / Assessor Policy is a key part of the quality assurance processes at Northumbria University. It assures the University that the quality and standards of its awards are secure and robust in terms of internal standards and external benchmarks by ensuring that awards at the same level and in similar subjects are comparable with those in different higher education providers in the UK. It also ensures that the system of assessment is fair and is objectively operated in the determination of awards made to students.		
Applicable to (list cohorts):	Staff: <i>All staff</i>	Students: <i>All students</i>	Third Parties: <i>All who are in a formal relationship with the University</i>
Effective From:	01 st November 2024	Last Review Date:	13 th November 2025
Approval Authority:	Education Committee	Approved:	14 th November 2025
Executive Owner:	Academic Registrar (Director of Quality and Academic Support)	Business Owner:	Review Manager – Academic Registry
Next Review Date:	24 th October 2027	Publication External Y/N	Y

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1 Purpose of the Policy

The External Examiner / Assessor Policy is a key part of the quality assurance processes at Northumbria University. It assures the University that the quality and standards of its awards are secure and robust in terms of internal standards and external benchmarks by ensuring that awards at the same level and in similar subjects are comparable with those in different higher education providers in the UK. It also ensures that the system of assessment is fair and is objectively operated in the determination of awards made to students.

This Policy aims to assist the University, its external examiners / assessors, staff and students by setting out how national and University expectations concerning external examining / assessing are met. It sets out the University's requirements of its external examiners / assessors, the ways in which they are used across the University and their participation in its programmes and the awards process.

2 External Context

This policy is designed to meet the requirements, expectations and guidelines of:

- 2.1 The Office of Students and the Ongoing Conditions of Registration¹, in particular:
 - The delivery of well-designed courses that provide a high-quality academic experience for all students, which enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.
 - The delivery of successful outcomes for all students, which are recognised and valued by employers, and/or enable further study.
 - Ensuring that qualifications awarded to students hold their value at the point of qualification and over time, in line with sector recognised standards.
 - The delivery of a course meets the academic standards as they are described in the Office for Students Sector Recognised Standards - Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications at Level 4 or higher.
- 2.2 The UK Quality Code for Higher Education² Expectations for Standards - Core Practice:
 - Using external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.
- 2.3 The UK Quality Code for Higher Education Expectations for Quality - Common Practice
 - The approach to managing quality takes account of external expertise.

¹ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/registering-with-the-ofs/registration-with-the-ofs-a-guide/conditions-of-registration/>

² <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

2.4 The Quality Assurance Agency Advice and Guidance³:

- External Expertise.

2.5 This document should also be read in conjunction with The Apprenticeship Framework for further details of this specific portfolio and the relevant regulators.

3 Relationship to other University Policies and Frameworks

- Programme Framework for Northumbria Awards (PFNA).
- Continuous Programme Performance Review (CPPR) and review framework.
- Assessment, marking and moderation policy (*under review*).
- Managing Assessment in Emergency principles (emergency regulations)
- Programme Level Surveys and the Teaching Survey Policy.
- Approval and Review.
- The Apprenticeship Framework.
- Academic Regulations for Taught Awards (ARTA).
- End Point Assessment Policy.
- Quality and Standards Framework.

4 Key Principles

The University expects its staff and external examiners / assessors to set assessments that are appropriate to the stated learning outcomes and Level, and to apply the relevant marking and moderation standards that are consistent with the national norms associated with the subject and/or practice. It also expects that regulations governing progression and award are applied consistently and fairly across the institution, and that there is a focus at programme level.

The external examiner / assessor process, related activity, and outcomes are designed to be transparent and clear to staff, students and all stakeholders. External examiners / assessors are expected to consider the academic context, procedural and regulatory context, moderation process, and the quality of feedback. They are also expected to consider and propose changes to modules and programmes as appropriate. Detailed Roles and Responsibilities are found in section 6 and please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

5 Criteria for Appointment

- 5.1 External examiners / assessors should be drawn from academic institutions and professional contexts (see section 5.2) to ensure that the programme benefits from high-level and impartial external scrutiny and expert practitioner advice. It is expected that external examiners / assessors assuring academic quality should be appointed with a demonstrable track record in the subject to be examined. Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.
- 5.2 Where programmes are subject to Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), or other practice-based requirements, and where it is stipulated that one or more of the external examining / assessor team should represent the profession or be

³ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/external-expertise>



a practitioner, this should be recorded by the Quality Review (QR) Team. There will be a definitive list for each programme, maintained by the QR Team, detailing the number and type of external examiners / assessors associated with it (see Appendix 1). Professional and practice-based appointments will be judged primarily against the criteria most related to the requirements of the role. Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

5.3 External examiners / assessors will be required to demonstrate:

- i) high standing, credibility, and breadth of experience within the subject, and command the respect of academic and professional peers.
- ii) competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme/module/subject to be examined, and awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula.
- iii) knowledge and understanding of UK sector national benchmarks for the maintenance of academic standards, assurance, enhancement of quality, and understanding of fair and equal learning outcomes for all students.
- iv) familiarity with the standard expected of students to achieve the award that is to be examined, and with any applicable criteria set by PSRBs.
- v) relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate.
- vi) competence and experience relating to the design and operation of a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject, sufficient recent examining/assessment experience preferably as an external examiner / assessor and an understanding of enhancement of the student learning experience.
- vii) fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language/s.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

5.4 To ensure impartiality the University will not appoint as an external examiner / assessor anyone in the following categories or circumstances:

- i) a member of a governing body or committee of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners.
- ii) A current student (or offer accepted to study) of the University.
- iii) anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme to be examined.
- iv) anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to significantly influence the future of students on the programme/module to be examined.
- v) anyone significantly involved in current or recent substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme to be examined.
- vi) former staff or students of the University unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner / assessor have completed their programme/s.
- vii) where a member of Northumbria University staff holds an external examiner / assessor appointment in the same subject area at the academic institution of



- the proposed external examiner / assessor.⁴
- viii) the succession of an external examiner / assessor from an academic institution by a colleague from the same subject area in the same institution within a five-year period.
 - ix) the succession of an expert practitioner external examiner / assessor by a colleague from the same non-academic company or organisation within a five-year period.
 - x) the appointment of more than one external examiner / assessor from the same subject area in the same academic institution or professional context. To avoid a predominance of external examiners / assessors from any one institution (regardless of subject) the QR Team will monitor the number of appointments at each institution.
 - xi) anyone who has previously served as external examiner / assessor for the same programme at any time within the previous five years.
 - xii) anyone who already holds two or more concurrent appointments as external examiner / assessor at first degree and/or higher degree levels.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

5.5 External examiners / assessors are appointed to programmes, with responsibility for modules or clusters of modules. They have a responsibility to consider the outcomes of the programme(s) and module(s) for which they are responsible across all deliveries. Where there is sufficient volume one of the external examiners / assessors will be appointed as the lead external examiner (see section 7). On programmes where there is only one external examiner / assessors they will undertake the role and duties of the lead examiner.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The following are the primary roles and responsibilities of external examiners / assessors who certify the following (please see Appendix 2 for further information about external assessors and apprenticeship programmes):

- i) academic standards (and professional standards if relevant) are set at the correct level for the programme and award.
- ii) student performance is assessed against these standards.
- iii) there are fair and equitable outcomes for all students.
- iv) assessment, in all of its aspects, is conducted fairly.
- v) the quality of the programme provided is, as a minimum, appropriate to meet national and international expectations.
- vi) there is evidence that students are sufficiently challenged in their academic learning.
- vii) there is consistency with and reference to the Academic Regulations for Taught Awards (ARTA) and to this Policy.

⁴ In the event of a member of Northumbria staff being appointed as external examiner to an institution where there is an existing external examiner appointment to Northumbria the case will be judged against compliance with the other criteria by QTE and a recommendation made to Quality and Standards Sub-Committee. In the event of concern the recommendation will be that the external examiner appointment will be terminated.

6.2 In meeting their primary roles and responsibilities external examiners / assessors are expected to:

- i) comment and offer informed judgements on all draft examination papers and other assessments at Office for Students Sector Recognised Standards - Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level 5 and above (except in the instances outlined below).⁵
- ii) receive and moderate representative samples of student work across the full ability range, checking for quality, consistency and completion of the moderation process and feedback to students.
- iii) confirm that the University grade descriptors and marking schemes have been applied correctly.
- iv) observe students as appropriate (e.g. in drama productions, or professional practice settings), or attend final shows/exhibitions (e.g. Design, Architecture).
- v) visit the University (either in-person or virtually) to participate in programme-focused meetings including a meeting with current students.
- vi) review the level and range of marks, and the consistency of marking, within and between modules, and across the whole programme, and multiple deliveries (where relevant).
- vii) consider the relationship between learning outcomes and assessment methods.
- viii) attend examination boards ⁶ and submit reports.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

6.3 External examiners / assessors will access the relevant University grade descriptors and associated marking schemes/criteria for individual assessments through the SITS eVision portal. They will also have access to:

- i) the assessments and moderation samples.
- ii) all marks contributing to a module mark, and marks for all modules.
- iii) student feedback.
- iv) internal moderation records.
- v) statistics on each module, including maximum, minimum and mean (average) mark, and standard deviation, split by characteristic (where possible).
- vi) a commentary where there is a discrepancy between marks.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

6.4 Schools will expect an external examiner / assessor to attend the University at least once per year for activities such as: undertaking moderation of student work; meeting a group of students; meeting with module/programme teams; attending exam boards.

⁵ External examiners may receive, for information only, draft FHEQ Level 4 assessments, except where the programme is wholly at FHEQ Level 4, or the programme is new, in which case the assessments will be for consideration, comment and approval. [Sector-recognised standards - Office for Students](#)

⁶ For the purpose of this policy, this term may include assessment boards held at module, programme or other levels, or other delivery models.

It should be made clear to all that such discussions do not involve any (re)assessment of any individual students.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

- 6.5 External examiners / assessors will receive work in accordance with the relevant assessment, marking and moderation policies, which specifies that work will be provided across the whole ability range demonstrated by the students. External examiners / assessors are required to verify marking standards, not re-mark and thus the adjustment of an individual's marks based on that sample alone is not appropriate. If an external examiner / assessor deems that marks are inconsistent across the sample, they may request a re-marking of all the assessed work in that module. The external examiner / assessor may also propose an adjustment of all marks if, in his/her view, the assessment is consistently over- or under-marked.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

- 6.6 Additionally, external examiners / assessors may be asked to:
- i) comment on changes to the Academic Regulations for Taught Awards.
 - ii) engage in consultation on structural changes to programmes.
- 6.7 External Examiners / assessors will not normally be members of any panel established to review the module(s) and/or programme(s) they examine (eg University Approvals Panel external subject specialist).

7 Lead External Examiners

The University will require its external examiners / assessors to be involved in all of the duties in section 6. In addition where a lead external examiner is appointed they will also be expected to:

- i) receive the reports of all the external examiners / assessors who review work which contributes to the programme/award, and the supporting datasets and information, for them to take an informed view of the programme as a whole, including comments on any attainment gaps.
- ii) confirm that a consistent and acceptable standard is being maintained across the programme.
- iii) where relevant act as a mentor for new or inexperienced external examiners / assessors.
- iv) attend by agreement the Programme Award Board where their responsibility is to ensure that regulations are consistently and fairly applied at the progression and award stage.

8 Nomination and Appointment Process

- 8.1 External examiners / assessors are appointed for a period of four years and five months (1 August – 31 December), in order to assess four successive cohorts of students and deal with any subsequent review of decisions. There will be no extensions to contract (except in the circumstances specified in section 8.5). New or inexperienced examiners / assessors will be allocated a mentor for the first year of contract, the mentor will be drawn from the School's lead examiners.



- 8.2 The QR Team will provide annually in January a list of those external examiners / assessors whose contract is due to end the following December. The Programme Leader is responsible for identifying suitable candidates who meet the criteria outlined in section 5, and for submitting the nomination form by the end of May. Nomination forms and other relevant documentation are accessible [via this link](#). Documentation should be forwarded to the QR Team who will coordinate the recruitment process. Forms which include the external assessor role should be signed off by the Associate Head of School International and Educational Partnerships. Failure to comply with the nomination deadline will be reported to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education).
- 8.3 The Faculty quality lead (or alternative cross-School approach) will consider and approve nominations against the appointment criteria, on behalf of Faculty Education Committee in liaison with Quality and Teaching Excellence. Nominations will be considered and approved at Quality and Standards Sub-committee by exception where there is deviation from policy. A list of recommendations is then made to Quality and Standards Sub-committee, and a list of all appointments is submitted annually to Academic Board and the Board of Governors.
- 8.4 Once approved a formal letter of appointment is issued by the QR Team which details specific roles and responsibilities, and directs examiners / assessors to the relevant web pages where regulatory and other information including the moderation task (which covers arrangements for approval of assessment tasks and the sampling of assessed work) and reporting requirements is provided.
- 8.5 Extensions to contract will only be considered where a programme has only one year left to run and all students are in their final year (if there are any concerns over the feasibility of appointing a suitable successor this needs to be discussed with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)). Proposals for contract extensions should be submitted on the appropriate form for scrutiny by the Faculty quality lead (or alternative cross-School approach) on behalf of Faculty Education Committee in liaison with Quality and Teaching Excellence. Forms which include the external assessor role should be signed off by the Associate Head of School International and Educational Partnerships. Nominations will be considered and approved at Quality and Standards Sub-committee by exception where there is deviation from policy.

9 Change of Duties

Where there is a need to change significantly the originally allocated duties the external examiner / assessor should be consulted. Following agreement the change of duties should be approved by the Faculty quality lead (or alternative cross-School approach) in liaison with Quality and Teaching Excellence on behalf of Faculty Education Committee. Forms which include the external assessor role should be signed off by the Associate Head of School International and Educational Partnerships. Nominations will be considered and approved at Quality and Standards Sub-committee by exception where there is deviation from policy.

10 Termination of Appointment

- 10.1 Under certain circumstances, the appointment of an external examiner / assessor may be terminated before the completion of his/her period of office. Premature termination may occur in the following instances:



- i) Resignation of the external examiner / assessor, giving 3 months' notice.
 - ii) Changes in module/programme or programme structure which renders the appointment no longer applicable.
 - iii) A conflict of interest arising during the term of office (see section 5.4).
 - iv) Non-fulfilment of external examiner's / assessor's duties, such as: failure to undertake moderation; failure to attend relevant training, induction or meetings with students; persistent failure to respond to communication from the University; failure to provide annual reports; persistent non-attendance at examination boards.
 - v) Retirement or career change.
 - vi) Unprofessional conduct.
 - vii) Irretrievable breakdown of relationship with module/programme teaching teams. such as to disadvantage students on the module/programme.
 - viii) Non-completion of the right to work check within 3 months of appointment.
 - ix) Appointment of the examiner / assessor as an employee of Northumbria University.
- 10.2 For instance i) the examiner / assessor should give notice in writing. The resignation will be reported to relevant committees and the Programme Leader should seek a replacement as soon as possible in line with the criteria and process outlined above.
- 10.3 For instance v), external examiners / assessors should notify the QR team if they will be retiring or leaving their academic (or practitioner, where applicable) post. In conjunction with the academic School, the University will then consider on a case by case basis whether the examiner's / assessor's tenure can continue, taking into account remaining tenure and/or relevance of new post.
- 10.4 For instances ii) to ix) inclusive, where Northumbria is initiating the termination of contract, a termination form should be prepared. This should include background/context, outline of steps taken to address any issues and summary of communication with the examiner / assessor. The form should also identify a proposed date for the termination to take effect and clarify if notice will be given or in the case of instance ix) if the termination is with immediate effect. Termination of appointments should be signed off by the relevant Head of School, and forms which include the external assessor role should be signed off by Associate Head of School International and Educational Partnerships . Forms should be approved by the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee on behalf of Education Committee. The Chair of the Sub-Committee (or delegated nominee) is responsible for ensuring communication to the examiner / assessor. Where an appointment is terminated the Programme Leader should seek a replacement as soon as possible in line with the criteria and process outlined above.
- 10.5 If a conflict of interest arises during an examiner's / assessor's term of office, with the agreement of the Faculty quality lead (or alternative cross-School approach) and Quality and Teaching Excellence, an appropriate notice period may be agreed.

11 Publication of External Examiner / Assessor Names

External examiners / assessors are identified by their name, position and institution/organisation in module and programme information provided to students, normally in the programme handbook. Registrars are responsible for ensuring this information is up to

date. A full list of external examiners / assessors is maintained by the QR Team and is available [via this link](#) (in the Useful Links section).

12 Induction and Information Sources

- 12.1 Following an individual's appointment, the new examiner will engage in induction activities:
- at University level attendance at an annual webinar (arranged by the QR Team), which will cover:
 - expectations in relation to quality and standards, including reporting.
 - roles and responsibilities.
 - key University systems and processes (including the moderation task via SITS eVision for agreeing the assessment and accessing sample assessments).
 - academic standards and regulations.
 - at School /Faculty level local follow up which will involve:
 - meeting the Programme Leader / team.
 - overview of programme(s)/modules/partners.
 - key timescales.
- 12.2 The QR Team and Faculty and/or Educational Partnership Team(s) will provide the external examiner / assessor access to specific information to expedite their duties including:
- General Information:
 - the programme handbook, including the programme and module specification(s).
 - a list of the accountable staff at programme and module level.
 - access to a schedule of assessment for the academic year.
 - dates for visits and/or meetings of the examination board.
 - Programme/Module Information:
 - Programme and module sites on the VLE (Blackboard Ultra), and other information as specified in section 6.3 above.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

13 Examination Boards

- 13.1 External examiners / assessors are expected to attend the relevant examination board which considers and reviews the following:
- i) module/programme statistics (including split metrics, comparative historical data, programme distribution curve).
 - ii) student outcomes.
 - iii) issues arising from the moderation process.
 - iv) external examiner input and comments.
 - v) programme outcomes (lead examiners).

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

- 13.2 One or more lead external examiners are also expected to attend the Programme

Awards Board (PAB) board. The emphasis of the role at the PAB is the consistency of the application of the regulations and for cases where discretion is applied due to Personal or Technical Extenuating Circumstances.

14 Reports and Feedback

14.1 External examiners / assessors are required to:

- i) Feedback to module tutor/programme leader on specific aspects in relation to their duties. This feedback is ongoing throughout the academic year and will also be available to:
 - Faculty Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education).
 - Faculty quality lead (or alternative cross-School approach).
 - Head of School.
 - The QR Team and QTE.
- ii) Complete an annual overview report (coordinated by the QR Team). It is a condition of contract that external examiners' / assessors' reports must be submitted before fees can be paid. Annual reports should be submitted by the following dates in any given year:

Date	Examiner	Programme area
1 July	Non lead	Undergraduate
31 July	Lead	Undergraduate
26 October	Non lead	Postgraduate and non-standard
16 November	Lead	Postgraduate and non-standard

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

14.2 The University expects its external examiners / assessors to take their reporting responsibilities seriously and it, in turn, makes careful use of those reports. External examiners / assessors are required to include informative comment and recommendations in their report in relation to the roles and responsibilities outlined in section 6 and specifically as follows:

- i) whether the University is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for its awards in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements.
- ii) the programme of study itself (clarity of programme aims and learning outcomes; the structure and content of the programme in relation to the general aims and learning outcomes).
- iii) student feedback (through any face-to-face meetings), and the programme response.
- iv) the organisation and administration of assessment procedures and adherence to procedures, regulations and rules for progression and the classification of awards.
- v) that any issues are addressed as specifically required by any relevant professional body.
- vi) confirmation that sufficient evidence was received to enable the role to be fulfilled (where evidence was insufficient, they give details).
- vii) areas of strength.
- viii) whether issues raised in previous report(s) have been, or are being, addressed to their satisfaction.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

- 14.3 External examiners' / assessors' reports are received through the SITS eVision portal and coordinated by the QR Team on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor. The reports are made available via the SITS eVision Portal to the following:
- Programme Leader.
 - Associate Head of School Education.
 - Head of School.
 - Apprenticeships Leads.
 - Faculty quality lead (or alternative cross-School approach).
 - University Director of Apprenticeships.
- 14.4 Where external examiners / assessors have raised matters of serious and urgent concern the report is also passed to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education). In such cases a response is requested from the Faculty for consideration and approval by the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee on behalf of Education Committee before responding to the external examiner / assessor.
- 14.5 The responsibility of the Head of School is to ensure that the reports are considered by the School Management Group.
- 14.6 The Faculty quality lead (or alternative cross-School approach) is responsible for producing an overview of key issues and actions relating to external examiner / assessor reports, for sign-off by the Head of School and Faculty Executive Group. QTE collates a University summary of the Faculty reports, which is considered by Education Committee and Academic Board. This summary highlights any issues requiring institutional action. This report forms part of the annual report to Board of Governors ensuring academic quality and standards.
- 14.7 Student representatives have the opportunity to consider external examiners' / assessors' reports and related action plans at Staff/Student Programme Committees.

15 Improvement and Enhancement

External examiners / assessors are expected to contribute to the improvement/enhancement of the programmes that they scrutinise for the University by providing informative comment and recommendations on:

- good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment observed by the external examiners / assessors.
- opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.



Appendix 1: List of programmes which are subject to Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), or other practice-based requirements, and where it is stipulated that one or more of the external examining / assessor team should represent the profession or be a practitioner (policy section 5.2)

Please refer to Appendix 2 for additional information on external assessors.

Faculty Name	School Name	Programme	Outline of professional body requirement
Society and Culture	Humanities and Social Sciences	Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship	College of Policing requirement for a professional/practitioner examiner as well as an academic examiner.
Society and Culture	Humanities and Social Sciences	Degree Holder Entry Programme: Graduate Diploma in Professional Policing Practice	College of Policing requirement for a professional/practitioner examiner as well as an academic examiner.
Science and Environment	Architecture and Built Environment	BA (Hons) Architecture	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and Architects Registration Board (ARB) both require a mix of professional and academic examiners due to the professional nature of the programmes.
Science and Environment	Architecture and Built Environment	PG Cert Interior Architecture	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and Architects Registration Board (ARB) both require a mix of professional and academic examiners due to the professional nature of the programmes.
Science and Environment	Architecture and Built Environment	MArch Architecture Degree Apprenticeship	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and Architects Registration Board (ARB) both require a mix of professional and academic examiners due to the professional nature of the programmes.
Science and Environment	Architecture and Built Environment	BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying and degree apprenticeship	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) requires 2 external examiners must be appointed to an accredited programme. At least one of



Faculty Name	School Name	Programme	Outline of professional body requirement
			these examiners must be a RICS qualified professional.
Science and Environment	Architecture and Built Environment	BSc (Hons) Real Estate	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) requires 2 external examiners must be appointed to an accredited programme. At least one of these examiners must be a RICS qualified professional.
Science and Environment	Architecture and Built Environment	MSc Real Estate	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) requires 2 external examiners must be appointed to an accredited programme. At least one of these examiners must be a RICS qualified professional.
Science and Environment	Architecture and Built Environment	MSc Surveying (Real Estate, Building Surveying, Quantity Surveying)	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) requires 2 external examiners must be appointed to an accredited programme. At least one of these examiners must be a RICS qualified professional.
Science and Environment	Engineering, Physics and Mathematics	MSc Project Management Framework: - MSc Project Management - MSc Construction Project Management with Building Information Modelling	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) requires 2 external examiners must be appointed to an accredited programme. At least one of these examiners must be a RICS qualified professional.

Appendix 2: External assessors and apprenticeship programmes

Introduction

This appendix focuses on the External Assessor role, as defined by Designated Quality Body in England, required for integrated end-point assessment external quality assurance and informed by ESFA standards and Professional and Statutory Professional Body requirements.

Criteria for Appointment

In addition to the points in Section 5, the following apply to external assessors:

- Point 5.1: In addition to possessing current knowledge and having relevant experience, external assessors must also have occupational competence and up to date industry experience in the related area of work. Northumbria University will reserve the right to request an updated CV during an examiner's tenure to comply with external regulatory requirements.
- Point 5.2: Appointment of external assessors should ensure that relevant PSRB guidance is followed where applicable. There are additional, specific requirements for programmes accredited by the relevant PSRB whereby the external assessor also acts as independent assessor.
- Point 5.3: External assessors also need to demonstrate the following:
 - i. They are knowledgeable about and competent in assessing apprentice achievement in the relevant subject and level of award.
 - ii. Competence and experience in the fields covered by the EPA and have a good understanding of apprenticeships.
 - iii. They have experience in the design and delivery of apprentices assessment at the award level.
 - iv. Ability to assess standards and identify good practice and recommend enhancements for development of the EPA.
- Point 5.4: External assessors must be independent from apprentices, employers, partners and independent assessors. They must also be independent from the delivery of the EPA.
- Point 5.5: External assessors are appointed specifically for the EPA. Part of the role is to build relationships and provide guidance and support.

Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to the points in Section 6, the following apply to external assessors:

- Point 6.1: The external assessor role focusses on the EPA aspect of the programme against the requirements of the specific apprenticeship standard. The external assessor may also be the external examiner for the programme.
- Point 6.2: External assessors may also engage with some or all of the following (dependant on the relevant apprenticeship standard):
 - View documentation associated with the EPA, including assessment materials and quality assurance documentation.
 - Where relevant observe live assessment of the EPA.
 - Observe assessor standardisation or moderation meetings.
 - Meet independent assessors and EPAO staff.
 - Meet with apprentices and where possible employers.



- Point 6.3: External assessors should also have access to wider documentation associated with the EPA, including the assessment plan for the standard.
- Point 6.4: External assessors' visits should also assess performance of the EPAO in delivering the EPA and monitor progress against actions previously identified.
- Point 6.5: External assessors must confirm if requirements for gateways have been met prior to confirmation that apprentices are ready for the EPA. They must confirm that EPAO documentation is current and fit for purpose, and that it covers requirements of the EPA assessment plan and occupational competence.

Induction and Information Sources

In addition to the points in Section 12, the following apply to external assessors:

- Point 12.2: External assessors should also have access to wider documentation associated with the EPA, including the assessment plan for the standard.

Examination Boards

In addition to the points in Section 13, the following apply to external assessors:

- Point 13.1: External assessors are expected to attend the Apprenticeship Assessment Board at which the final decision on the EPA is confirmed.

Reports and Feedback

In addition to the points in Section 14, the following apply to external assessors:

- Point 14.1: External assessors will also complete a separate report on EPA activities which will be provided to the regulator.
- Point 14.2: The separate report has been designed in line with the reporting expectations as set out in the regulator's guidance.

Version No.	Reviewer	Date	Changes
1.0		01/11/2024	Original version of Policy
2.0	Review Manager – Academic Registry	13/11/2025	Administrative changes made to include: Reference to Office for Students Sector Related Standards added Update to OfS link Update to footnote 5
3.0	Review Co-ordinator- Academic Registry	09/12/2025	Minor administrative updated to reflect new academic structure and professional support structure.