

Policy Identifier: MIE Role of External Examiners

Policy Title:	MIE Role of External Examiners Policy
Description:	This document provides information on External Examiners at Marino Institute of Education.
Author (Position):	The Director of Undergraduate Studies for undergraduate programmes and the Director of Postgraduate Studies for postgraduate programmes
Version:	1.1
Approved By:	MIE Governing Body
Policy Approval Date:	June 2023
Date of Next Policy Review:	June 2027 (or as necessary)

MIE Role of External Examiners Policy

This policy is aligned with the External Examiners Policy of Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin (hereafter referred to as Trinity) (QPoIEEPT, version 2.0., August 2023) a Marino Institute of Education (MIE) is accountable to Trinity for the quality assurance of programmes validated by Trinity.

1. Role

The role of external examiners is an important and constructive one in terms of assuring the quality of our courses in an atmosphere of collaboration and reciprocity. The external examiner acts as a critical friend for courses with respect to their content, organisation and assessment. The primary responsibility of the external examiner is to ensure that academic standards are high, that regulations governing assessment¹ are implemented and that students are treated fairly and consistently².

2. Benefits of the External Examiner Role

- External examiners bring an objective perspective to course content and assessment¹ in the institute.
- Work on MIE courses is benchmarked with comparable courses in other institutions.
- Their reports offer opportunities for discussion of assessment of student work.
- External examiners help ensure transparency of the implementation of assessment policies and procedures for staff and students^{1,3}.
- External examiners often introduce ideas and strategies to staff that have worked well elsewhere and which may work in MIE.

3. Scope

- External examiners are typically appointed for a three-year term by the [University Council](#) after having been nominated by the MIE – Associated Colleges Degrees Committee.

Copies of exam papers (from 2018-19 onwards) and assignment details (from 2019-20 onwards) are sent to external examiners for comment in advance of being circulated.

¹ See [Academic Assessment and Academic Progression](#)

² See [Equality Policy](#)

³ See [Assessment Handbook](#)

- A sample of students' work across all years will be made available to the external examiner(s) at the annual and supplemental examination periods.
- External examiners will attend both Court of Examiners⁴. In exceptional cases, remote presence, in line with the Trinity Policy on External Examiners may be acceptable.
- The external examiner will look at marks of high achieving students and at cases where disagreement exists between a first and second marker.
- Where placement is part of the programme it is envisaged that the external examiner will accompany tutors/supervisors⁵ on a sample of visits to placement sites at least once during their tenure in order to provide feedback on the link between theory and practice.
- Staff members will be available to provide context for the external examiner in relation to particular modules and students.
- It may be useful to take a particular theme (e.g. feedback, criticality, creativity) and to speak to course coordinators about it in relation to the modules on the course.
- External examiners will typically meet with course coordinators.
- External examiners are encouraged to meet with students where that is practicable.
- A response to the report from the previous year is presented to the external examiner as soon as practicable after the Court of Examiners⁴.

4. Courts of Examiners

- An external examiner may suggest modifications to marks at the Court of Examiners and these marks may be modified at the discretion of the Court. Any changes made should be done in a systematic way in line with institute regulations and should not advantage or disadvantage a student because a specific sample of work was reviewed or not reviewed by the external examiner.

Within six weeks of the Supplemental Court of Examiners a written report is sent by the External Examiner on a standard form. This is to reassure Trinity about the quality of the courses and to stimulate discussion among faculty members.

⁴ See [Academic Assessment and Academic Progression](#)

⁵ See [Tutor System Policy](#) and [Tutor System Procedure](#)

- In the unlikely event of a report not being submitted, the minutes of the External Examiner's comments at the Court of Examiners will provide guidance for course development.

5. Criteria for Appointing External Examiners

- The number of external examiners appointed to the degree year of each programme must be enough to ensure that sufficient expertise is available to cover all areas of the syllabus under assessment.
- External examiners must possess sufficient seniority, experience and achievement in the discipline covered by the programme.
- External examiners should normally be attached to a third level institution and hold qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being assessed.
- External examiners should not have any existing or recent relationships with MIE staff or students that could call their impartiality into question.
- External examiners must have experience in teaching and recommended that they have programme/curriculum management experience at the level that they are examining e.g., Programme Coordinator
- If the nominated external examiner is emeritus, they must demonstrate ongoing engagement with the discipline and educational process and commence their term as External Examiner within three years of retiring from an active teaching role.

6. Term of Appointment

- External examiners are appointed for a term of three academic years.
- Extensions for examiners to serve an additional year for taught programmes may be sought under exceptional circumstances and require approval from the Trinity Dean of Undergraduate Studies or Trinity Dean of Graduate Studies
- Examiners in taught programmes may not be re-appointed unless at least six years have elapsed since the end of their previous appointment.
- An external examiner may be discharged from their appointment at any time during their term if they fail to adequately perform their roles and responsibilities as outlined in this policy or if conflicts of interest arise during their term.

7. Responsibility

The Dean of Education (Policy, Practice and Society) is responsible for overseeing this policy in relation to undergraduate programmes. The Dean of Education (Curriculum and Childhood) is responsible for overseeing this policy in relation to postgraduate programmes.

8. Payment

- MIE pays external examiners of taught programmes fees at a fixed rate, in line with that paid by Trinity, and also reimburses expenses incurred.
- External examiners must complete the required payment forms in order to facilitate payment.

9. Related Documents

- [Academic Assessment and Academic Progression](#)
- [Trinity External Examiner Policy – Taught Programmes](#)
- [MIE Equality Policy](#)
- [Assessment Handbook](#)
- [Tutor System Policy](#)
- [Tutor System Procedure](#)

Appendix 1: Sample requirements from Lecturers for External Examiners Form

- Failing scripts of students (all modules)
- Selection of scripts of each module, in each grade bracket, of students on all years of course
- Module evaluations, where available

AC. YEAR, Annual Requirements from lecturers for COURSE NAME external examiner, EXTERNAL EXAMINER NAME

- **Crse name** JF and SF - failing scripts only (all modules)
- **Crse name** JS and B Ed SS – all failing scripts and also a selection of scripts of each module, in each grade bracket (approx. five per grade or all if fewer than five).
- Module evaluations, where available

External Examiner: _____

Dates of Visit: _____ Location: **tbc**

Time: 09.30 – 16.00 Lecturer's Name _____

Course:	B.Ed.	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Year:	1	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
				2	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
				3	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
				4	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>

Module Name _____

Access to Moodle page for this Module

Module Specification:	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Examples of Lecturer Engagement with Students Sample Feedback from Lecturers to Students	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
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Exam Paper:	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Assignment Guidelines	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Presentation Guidelines	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
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Marking Criteria/Rubric		Mark Sheet for Entire cohort		
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Sample of Student evaluations of module supplied: Yes ____ / No ____

Failing Scripts (every failing script, in any module/programme year)		Specify Number submitted	
Total No. of Hons III in year group		Specify Number submitted	
Total No. of Hons II.2 in year group		Specify Number submitted	
Total No. of Hons II.1 in year group		Specify Number submitted	
Total No. of Hons I in year group		Specify Number submitted	

Please turn over

The following information is provided to you on MAESTRO:

Statistical information about the marks awarded:

Maximum mark awarded: _____

Minimum mark awarded: _____

Median mark awarded: _____

Modal mark awarded: _____

Mean mark awarded: _____

Standard Deviation: _____

Appendix II – Annual External Examiner Report Template

Annual External Examiner Report

Course Details:

Academic Year examined	Choose an item.
Programme/Course/ Strand being examined (in full)	
Module or Subject title/code (in full)	
Course levels examined (UG or PGT)	Choose an item.
Specify years	<input type="checkbox"/> 1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd <input type="checkbox"/> 4th <input type="checkbox"/> 5th <input type="checkbox"/> PGT
Mode of delivery (Face to Face or Online)	Choose an item.

Extern Details

Name	
Home University/Institution	
Year Appointed	Choose an item.
Year of current term (Yr1, Yr2, Yr3, Extended Yr4)	Choose an item.
Date(s) of Visit	

Section A: Examinations and Court of Examiners

A1: Did you receive all the necessary information on the aims, objectives and structure of the programme/course? *[These would generally be provided in the Course or Programme Handbook and include module descriptors and learning outcomes; marking schemes and examination conventions; criteria for the award of Gold Medals (UG only)]*

Yes No

A2.1: Where written examinations form a component of the assessment, did you receive the draft examination papers?

Yes No Not applicable

A2.2: Where you made recommendations on draft examination papers, were these acted upon?

Yes No Not applicable

A3: Did you have access to all scripts and assessment work that you wished to see?

Yes No

A4: Where the conduct or moderation of oral examinations, performances/recitals forms part of the programme/course or module you were examining, were suitable arrangements made to facilitate your attendance?

Yes No Not applicable

A5: Was the Court of Examiners' meeting conducted to your satisfaction?

Yes No if no, please comment

Comment:

A6: Did you seek the opportunity to speak to students or to review feedback provided by students on the programme/ course/module that you are examining?

Yes No

Section A: Additional comments on External Examiner Arrangements *(optional)*

Section B: Curriculum Design, Assessment, Standards

B1: Your comment is sought on the **curriculum design and content** including strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.

[Coherence and content of the curriculum as compared to similar programmes/courses elsewhere; extent to which programme/module learning outcomes addressed skills and competencies as well as knowledge]

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B2: Your comment is sought on the **assessment tools** used and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.

[Standard and scope of questions/problems set in examination papers and formative assessment; appropriateness of assessment methodology to achievement of learning outcomes, balance of formative and summative assessment]

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B3: Your comment is sought on the **quality and standard of marking and feedback and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.**
[Standard and appropriateness of marking criteria used; consistency of marking; clarity and transparency of the marking scheme and internal examiners' comments; quality of feedback to students]

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B4: Your comment is sought on the **assessment of dissertations/projects and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.**
[Appropriateness of choice of subjects; marking scheme and criteria; quality of submitted work; appropriateness of the assessment methodology].

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B5: Your comment is sought on the **standards of the programme/course/ module and performance of students and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement. *[Academic standards and achievements of students i.e. (i) quality of candidates, pass rates; (ii) compared to other higher education institutions, of which you have had experience; (iii) If applicable, compared with previous years].***

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Document Identifier: MIE Role of External Examiners

B6: Where the mode of delivery is **wholly online**, your assessment of the online learning environment is requested in terms of i. ease of access ii. ease of navigation iii. optimisation of teaching, learning and assessment via the web including opportunities for social interaction and collaboration with peers.

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B7: Your comment is sought on any other specific aspect of the programme/course/module(s) that you wish to highlight as an example of good practice or that you would like to see disseminated more widely e.g. curriculum resources.

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Section B. Additional comments on Curriculum Design, Assessment and Standards (*optional*)

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Section C: Feedback/Quality Assurance

C1: Your feedback is sought on whether your recommendations from previous years have been implemented and if you received communication that they have been addressed.

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C2: If applicable, please provide feedback on the resourcing of the programme/course /modules.

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Section D: Collaborative or Transnational Provision (if applicable)

D1: If collaborative and transnational arrangements are applicable to the programme/course/module you are examining, please comment on the **assessment and the achievement** of students in different sites.

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Section E: European Data Protection Regulation (applicable to all External Examiners EU/Non-EU)

External Examiners are asked to confirm in respect of documentation/files received from College that do not retain documents for longer than the period required for their external examining duties and have taken the one or more of the following steps (tick all those applicable (refer [Advisory on European General Data Protection](#)):

- E1: destroyed printed/hardcopies of students assessed work received from the School/Department ; or
- E2: returned printed/hardcopies of students assessed work to the School/Department for safe disposal ; and
- E3: permanently deleted electronic/soft copy files of student assessed work from my computer .

External Examiner electronic signature.....

Section F: Final Report *(for year 3 (final year) or year 4 (extended year) of External Examiner Term)*

E1: You are invited to provide your overall observations on the programme/course/module(s) you have examined in this term of appointment.

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Document Identifier: MIE Role of External Examiners



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E2: Additional Comments on your experience as an External Examiner in Trinity College:
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External Examiner electronic signature.....
Date of submission.....
External examiner email address.....

For Office use only
Date received by Senior Lecturer/Dean of Graduate Studies: .../.../20....
Date reviewed: .../.../20....

Reviewer comments including actions required by School in response to External Examiner recommendations:

Reviewer signature:
Date disseminated to School: .../...../20..

Notes to Completing External Examiner Report

External Examiner Annual Reports contribute to the quality assurance of teaching and learning i.e.

- i. inform internal quality assurance activities by programmes and schools;
- ii. inform reviews of Trinity programmes and schools by College and by professional and statutory accreditation bodies;
- iii. inform institutional level quality assurance and enhancement of Trinity by Quality & Qualifications Ireland and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

External Examiners are asked to:

- i. complete all sections of the report template, as appropriate;
- ii. return the completed annual report within eight weeks of completion of duties for the external examining period
- iii. include in the report, any recommendations discussed and agreed at the Courts of Examiners for improvement at programme, course or module level.
- iv. email the completed report to the [sean.delaney@mie.ie mailbox](mailto:sean.delaney@mie.ie) ([copying mai.ralph@mie.ie](mailto:mai.ralph@mie.ie)) and include **UG** or **PGT** in the subject line of your email to facilitate the dissemination of the report to the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies /Senior Lecturer or the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate.
- v. Confirm that they have safely disposed of or returned to the School for safe disposal, hard copy documentation or deleted electronic files provided to them to facilitate completion of their external examiner duties.

We thank you for your commitment to College in your role as External Examiner.

Dean of Undergraduate Studies/ Senior Lecturer and the Dean of Graduate Studies.