

# A08.5 External Examining

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Policy Statement

This policy addresses ongoing quality assurance of SAE validated programmes through the core practice of external examination of assessment, student progression and awards.

To ensure that the academic standards of the validated programmes are maintained the partner University shall appoint a team of External Examiners, in accordance with the University policies and regulations. Each validated programme shall have at least one External Examiner appointed by the University. The duties of External Examiners are detailed in this policy, in line with University regulations, and taking into account the UK Quality Code.

### 1.2 Related Policies and Documents

This policy aligns with policies and regulations of partner Universities, and with collaboration agreements between SAE and the Universities. Where any inconsistency or lack of clarity exists between this policy and partner University regulations as a result of changes made by the University, then the University regulations should prevail. The policy should be read in conjunction with:

- University of Hertfordshire UPR AS14 - Structure and Assessment Regulations
- University of Hertfordshire UPR AS17 - Academic Quality
- Middlesex University Learning and Quality Enhancement Handbook, Section 4 – External Examiner

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to any programme or module delivered at SAE Institute and validated by a UK University partner. External Examiners are appointed by the University to oversee programmes at FHEQ Levels 5, 6 and 7, and by doing so explicitly endorse the standards of those same programmes at Level 4.

## 3 Policy

### 3.1 Appointment of External Examiners

The University partner has responsibility for appointing External Examiners. SAE will assist the University in identifying suitable External Examiners who meet the requirements, though all decisions on such appointments will be in the sole discretion of the University.

The period of office for an External Examiner is normally four years but may be extended by up to one year under exceptional circumstances.

It is the responsibility of the University to ensure that the search for replacements for Examiners whose term of office is due to expire is begun in good time. If appropriate, appointments may be phased to enable and encourage mentoring of new Examiners.

Appointments will be scrutinized and approved by the University in line with the processes and criteria set out in their own policies.

External Examiners must be appointed for all SAE programmes leading to a University-validated award.

### **3.2 Induction**

Following their appointment, Examiners will receive copies of all relevant SAE and University regulations. Induction sessions will be arranged with staff from both SAE and the University before the Examiner begins their term.

SAE will contribute to induction of Examiners to offer an insight into the history and culture of SAE Institute; to ensure that they are conversant with all processes or procedures that may not be the same as those of the University; and to offer tours of, or information on, specialist facilities at the various SAE locations.

### **3.3 Termination of Appointments**

An External Examiner's tenure is dependent on their successful acquittal of the role and responsibilities outlined in this policy. The University may move to terminate an Examiner's appointment if they have consistently failed to engage with the role, or to carry out the responsibilities assigned to them. Procedures for termination will be outlined in University policy.

SAE does not have the power to terminate an Examiner's appointment but may request that the University explore this option if there is sufficient evidence that an Examiner is not carrying out their responsibilities.

In the event that an Examiner seeks to terminate their own appointment for any reason (such as a change in personal or professional circumstances that cause the Examiner to be unable to fulfil the requirements of the role, or an unexpected conflict of interests arising), they are normally requested to give three months' notice in writing to both SAE and the University, to allow time for a suitable replacement to be found.

## 4 Responsibilities of Examiners

The role of the External Examiner is to audit the programme assessment process; to ensure that justice is done to the individual student; to ensure that the academic standards of both SAE and the University are maintained; and to ensure compliance with the regulations for the award.

To enable Examiners to fulfil their roles effectively, SAE will ensure that they are given adequate opportunity to meet and communicate with internal examiners and other programme faculty involved with learning, teaching and assessment.

### 4.1 Engagement with Assessment Boards

Examiners are required to attend all meetings of SAE Boards for their relevant programme(s). Physical attendance at SAE Boards is not a requirement of the role, as meetings are conducted via online video conferencing to facilitate the distributed SAE campuses and regions.

No recommendation for the conferment of a University award may be made without the written consent of the Examiner. If, exceptionally, an Examiner is unable to attend a Board, they should be consulted on the decisions of the Board and their written confirmation obtained prior to any publication of results.

Duties and responsibilities of the External Examiner role are detailed in the partner University policy.

## 4.2 Annual Reporting

Examiners are required to report annually to the University on the programmes and/or modules for which they are responsible. This is facilitated by the University partner, with the assistance of SAE faculty as required. SAE faculty will have the opportunity to provide a considered response to Examiners' reports, both in a direct reply to the Examiner, and through annual monitoring processes.

In addition to their annual reports, Examiners are free at any time to write directly to the Chairs of Assessment Boards, SAE regional Deans or the appropriate senior faculty at the partner University, on any matter of concern to them.

## 5 Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Copyright

In compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), SAE Institute and the University Partner will use personal data submitted by the External Examiners for necessary communications, and for the payment of fees. Staff will not disclose Examiners' personal data to any external person or body without the consent of the Examiner.

Examiners may receive some personal data on students where necessary in the regular course of their examining duties; such information must not be disclosed or shared.

External Examiner reports may be circulated within SAE and the University Partner, or provided to an external regulator where appropriate, for the purposes of quality assurance and monitoring. Reports may also be shared under Freedom of Information requests or GDPR Subject Access Requests. If Examiners request for their report(s) to be anonymized in such cases, SAE will make reasonable efforts to do so.

Copyright of the External Examiner reports submitted is owned by the University partner.

## 6 Policy History

Policy Created:	July 2021
Date of Last Revision:	November 2021
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