**EXTERNAL EXAMINER PROCEDURES**

**INTRODUCTION**

Following the successful acquisition of Taught Degree Awarding Powers, Ravensbourne will take on full responsibility for its External Examiner arrangements. Currently the majority of this work lies with our validating partner, University of the Arts London.

It is anticipated that Ravensbourne will take on this responsibility from 2018/19. Due to the term dates associated with the Postgraduate Certificate for Teaching and Learning in Creative Courses, the examiner for this course may be operating under Ravensbourne’s procedures in the 2017/18 academic year.

This paper is designed to give an overview of these arrangements and Academic Board is asked to consider the proposals put forward in this paper.

An updated policy on External Examining was approved by Quality Development Committee on Thursday 16 February 2016 and it is appended to this paper for reference (Appendix 1).

**NUMBER OF EXAMINERS** (Based on courses as currently validated)

Ravensbourne’s assessment regulations state ‘In the case of a Bachelor’s degree with honours, Ravensbourne will assess all credits at stages 2 and 3 (Level 5 and 6) taking the best 30 credits from Stage 2 and the best 90 credits from Stage 3,’ and so external examiner will have to consider work at both levels, which differs from UAL’s regulations which require examiners to consider final year work only.

It is proposed that the following courses will have more than one examiner, based on the student numbers across Level 5 and Level 6 in 2018/19.

* Architecture – currently shares 2 examiners, proposal to increase to 3

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Architecture | 51 | 42 |
| IDEAs | 38 | 25 |
| Urban Landscape Architecture | 25 | - |
|  |  | 181 |

* Digital Photography – proposal to increase to 2 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Digital Photography | 58 | 56 |
|  |  | 111 |

* Digital Advertising & Design – proposal to increase to 2 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Digital Advertising & Design | 50 | 50 |
|  |  | 100 |

* Graphic Design – proposal to have 3 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Graphic Design | 80 | 75 |
|  |  | 155 |

* Fashion – proposal to have 2 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Fashion | 65 | 52 |
|  |  | 118 |

* Fashion Promotion – proposal to have 2 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Fashion Promotion | 50 | 46 |
|  |  | 94 |

* Fashion Buying & Brand Management – proposal to have 2 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Fashion Buying & Brand Management | 67 | 55 |
|  |  | 122 |

* Digital Film Production – proposal to have 3 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Digital Film Production | 192 | 165 |
|  |  | 357 |

* Digital Television Production – proposal to have 2 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Digital Television Production | 71 | 61 |
|  |  | 132 |

* Editing & Post Production – proposal to have 2 examiners

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **Level 5** | **Level 6** |
| Editing & Post Production | 71 | 61 |
|  |  | 132 |

* Postgraduate – currently shares 2 examiners, proposal to have 3 examiners (x1 for MA, x1 for MSc and x1 for MDes)
* Contextual Studies – currently shares 2 examiners, proposal to have 4

This gives a total of 39 examiners, an increase of 15 from our current total (24).

The specific duties of each examiner will be outlined at the appointment stage. For courses with more than one examiner, a lead examiner will be appointed which will carry an additional fee and the following responsibilities:

* Meet with other examiners appointed to the course(s)/unit(s)
* Resolve areas of disagreement between examiners
* Act as mentor to new examiners appointed to the course, who lack external examining experience

The above number of examiners are based on courses are they are currently validated and may be revisited once more detail is known on the optional electives and also should there be any changes to Contextual Studies.

**APPOINTMENT PROCESS**

Appointments will be made on the nomination form (see Appendix 2) by the relevant Associate Dean to the Quality Office and will be proposed at the relevant Board of Study. The consideration of External Examiner nominations by the Boards of Studies can take place virtually should time not permit consideration at a scheduled meeting. Following consideration at the Board of Studies, the Chair will approve the nomination form.

Following the proposal from the Board of Study the proposed appointment will be considered by a sub-committee of Academic Board, which will have delegated responsibility from Academic Board to consider proposed nominations. The sub-committee will be constituted of the following members of Academic Board:

* Director (or their nominee), Chair
* Dean who is independent from the nomination
* Relevant Associate Dean
* RSU Vice-President Education
* Quality Officer, secretary

The decision of the sub-committee of Academic Board will be reported to the next meeting of Academic Board.

In cases where the sub-committee cannot agree to the nomination, it can be referred to Academic Board for discussion. It is envisaged that this would rarely occur.

Terms of appointment

Once an external examiner’s nomination has been confirmed they will be contacted by Quality with an introductory letter from the Director alongside the Terms of Appointment (Appendix 3).

External Examiners are, by necessity, independent and not considered employees of Ravensbourne as they are employed by other institutions. However, the purpose of the terms of appointment are to outline the expectations Ravensbourne has on examiners for clarity, it also outlines the criteria under which their appointment can be terminated.

Changes to tenure

The following changes can be made to an external examiner’s tenure:

* Extension by up to one year in exceptional circumstances
* Reassignment of duties (usually occurs when an additional examiner is appointed)

These changes to tenure should be submitted on the relevant proforma (Appendix 4) and considered at the appropriate Board of Studies.

Termination of Appointment

Should an examiner fail to fulfil their duties Ravensbourne will take appropriate action. Where the failure is deemed to be minor (for example non-attendance at the exam board) Ravensbourne will write to the examiner to remind them of their duties.

If the failure is serious (for example, failure to submit the annual report) Quality Development Committee will consider the termination of the examiner’s appointment and make a recommendation to Academic Board.

**INDUCTION**

Following appointment the External Examiner will be contacted with the following information:

* External Examiner Handbook
* External Examiner reports for the previous 2 years
* Annual Course Monitoring Report from the previous year
* Completed External Examiner Action Plan from the previous year
* Minutes from the previous year’s assessment board
* Assessment Regulations
* Details of induction

Ravensbourne will also send a diversity questionnaire to newly appointed external examiners in order to monitor this.

As part of the induction process it is proposed that the external examiner undertake the online course developed by the HEA to improve the professional development of external examiners. Following this there will be an annual induction event held at Ravensbourne where they will have the opportunity to meet with course teams.

Should an examiner be appointed mid-year they will receive an individual induction which may coincide with the first visit.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The duties of an external examiner are laid out in the policy and Terms of Appointment which the examiners sign-up to at their appointment and are as follows:

* Approval of assessment that contributes towards the award
* Sampling of student work
* Attendance at the final assessment board
* Comment on proposed changes to validated courses
* Submission of an annual report (Appendix 5)

**RESPONSE TO REPORTS**

External examiners will submit their reports following the final assesment board to [examiners@rave.ac.uk](file:///Users/AFiorentino/Downloads/examiners@rave.ac.uk) receipt of the report will be acknowledged and forwarded onto the relevant Course Leader.

Course response

The Course Leader should complete an External Examiner Action Plan within one month of receipt of the report, identifying the areas of good practice and also the areas of concern. This will then be shared with the examiner, and progress against the actions will be monitored by the Board of Studies, and shared with the examiner once complete.

Reports will also feed into the Annual Course Monitoring Process.

Institutional response

Once all of the External Examiner reports are received an overview report is written for Academic Board, which gives an overview of the process, short summary of each report and identifies common issues and areas for good practice.

In the event of an examiner identifying a serious concern they can raise this with the institution directly, at [examiners@rave.ac.uk](file:///Users/AFiorentino/Downloads/examiners@rave.ac.uk) and these will be responded to as a matter of urgency.

**FEES AND EXPENSES**

Ravensbourne will pay examiner an annual fee on submission of their annual report. Examiners will be paid a flat fee of £500, and the role of chief examiner will carry an additional fee of £50.

Ravensbourne will also cover expenses incurred by External Examiner in the fulfilment of their duties, such as travel and accommodation costs in line with the staff expenses policy.