

# Board of Examiners Terms of Reference

## Section 1 - INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

(1) The Board of Examiners is the committee with the responsibility for decision-making for summative assessment decisions, as well as decisions related to the recommendations of Assessors.

### Status of the Board of Examiners

(2) The Board of Examiners fulfils the regulatory requirement set out in [Assessment and Standards](#) to establish a board or committee to consider all assessment findings and to determine assessment results for each of the learners presented.

(3) The Board of Examiners is a subcommittee of the Academic Board.

## Section 2 - COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

(4) The composition and membership of the Board of Examiners is as follows:

a. Ex Officio Members

i. Registrar

ii. Programme Director

iii. Academic Dean

iv. All External Examiners for the programme being considered

v. All Assessors involved in determining student grades on the programme being considered

vi. All Grade Moderators involved in moderating the provisional marks awarded for the programme being considered

vii. All Faculty and Adjunct Faculty involved in the delivery of the modules on the programme being considered

viii. Where the volume of Adjunct Faculty on a programme prohibits effective committee management, a representative sample of Adjunct Faculty will be invited by the committee chairperson.

b. Chairperson

i. The Registrar is the ex officio chairperson.

c. Vice Chairperson

i. The Academic Dean is the ex officio vice chairperson.

d. Appointed Members

- i. There are no appointed members.

e. External Members.

- i. The External Examiner(s) constitute the external member(s). These are external academics with knowledge of educational delivery and assessment in an area relevant to the Programme being considered.

f. Nominated Members

- i. There are no nominated members.

g. Elected Members

- i. There are no elected members.

h. Co-Opted Members

- i. Other members of Faculty for the programme under consideration may be invited to the Board of Examiners.

i. In Attendance - By Invitation

- i. The chairperson may invite an external party deemed relevant to the business of a meeting.

j. In Attendance – Secretarial

- i. Normally the Assessment and Awards Manager or a member of the Assessment and Awards Office acts as ex officio secretary to the Board of Examiners

- ii. Programme Administrators may be in attendance to support the Board of Examiners.

## Section 3 - TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Part A - Functions and Responsibilities of the Board of Examiners

(5) The Board of Examiners:

- a. Considers the recommendations of all Assessors, Grade Moderators, External Examiners and other Faculty and Adjunct Faculty on the programme under consideration.
- b. Determines the summative assessment outcomes for all students on all modules on all programmes validated by QQI leading to awards in the [National Framework of Qualifications](#).
- c. Determines the final award classification for all students on programmes validated by QQI leading to awards in the [National Framework of Qualifications](#).
- d. Makes decisions concerning applications for mitigation of extenuating circumstances submitted by students in respect of their assessments.
- e. Discusses any matters arising in relation to academic integrity, including submitted reports on academic impropriety.
- f. Formally reports to the Academic Board on an annual basis the activity of the Board of Examiners.

## **Part B - Meetings**

### **Nature of Meetings**

(6) Board of Examiners meetings may take place face-to-face, by telephone, videoconference or other electronic means.

(7) Board of Examiners members are required to fully prepare for each meeting, read the documentation in advance and make every reasonable effort to attend each meeting.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

(8) Normally, the Board of Examiners meets at all progression and award stages of programmes.

### **Quorum**

(9) The Board of Examiners may conduct business despite the absence of some members, provided that the Programme Director, or nominee, and the Registrar is satisfied that the members present and reports collected are sufficient to properly conduct business. The Registrar and Programme Director, or nominee, must be present for Board of Examiners meetings to proceed.

### **Decisions**

(10) Decisions are normally made by consensus within the limits of the terms of reference but, in the absence of consensus, by open vote.

(11) Where there is a tied vote, the Chairperson has the casting vote.

(12) Decisions may be made either at a duly called and constituted meeting, or by a resolution in writing to all members which is approved in writing by at least a quorum of members.

(13) Any matters for decision considered when the meeting is deemed inquorate by the Registrar must be subsequently ratified at the next Board meeting before those decisions can be actioned.

(14) All decisions must be formally recorded. In the absence of a formal record, any apparent decision shall be deemed null and void.

### **Chair's Action**

(15) Normally, decisions about the performance and progress of learners are made at a scheduled meeting of the Board of Examiners. However, in exceptional circumstances, the Chair is empowered to take appropriate action in consultation with the appropriate External Examiners and the relevant Programme Director outside of the confines of a meeting of the Board of Examiners.

(16) All decisions taken by Chair's action should be reported to the Academic Board at the next Academic Board meeting.

(17) Circumstances where a Chair's action might be used may include, but are not limited to, ratification of marks following convening of an Appeals Committee, a question arising about mitigating circumstances or the remediation of any other matters arising post scheduled Board of Examiners.

## **Part C - Ensuring Effective Practice**

## **Agenda and Minutes**

- (18) Agendas and any associated documentation are distributed at least five working days before the meeting.
- (19) Members are provided with access to materials in advance of the meeting.
- (20) Only with the chairperson's permission may late papers or the tabling of papers be accepted.
- (21) All papers must be submitted to the secretary by the specified submission deadline.
- (22) Board records shall be retained by the secretary.
- (23) Minutes are to be prepared of each meeting.
- (24) The chairperson reviews the draft minutes and matters arising, after which the secretary circulates the documents to all Board members and includes them in the agenda papers for the next meeting.

## **Annual Work Plan**

- (25) The annual work plan for the Board of Examiners is determined by the progression and award stages of the programmes.

## **Access to Resources**

- (26) All members, both internal and external, are given access to all resources and artefacts needed to fulfill their duties as members.

## **Conflict of Interest**

- (27) Where a member has a conflict of interest, either real or perceived, in relation to an item of business and/or a student they must notify the Chairperson.
- (28) Where the Chairperson acknowledges such as conflict of interest the affected individual is recused from the meeting and all decision making related to the item of business and/or student.

## **Part D - Evaluation and Review**

### **Review by the Academic Board**

- (29) The Board of Examiners is reviewed by the Academic Board on its performance against these terms of reference every three years.

### **Review of the Terms of Reference**

- (30) The chairperson reviews these Terms of Reference every three years, in conjunction with the Academic Board, and amends as appropriate.
- (31) Any amendments are subject to ratification by the Academic Board.

## Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	18th September 2023
Review Date	18th September 2026
Approval Authority	Quality Assurance Officer
Approval Date	15th September 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Enquiries Contact	Quality Assurance

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Assessment"** - The assessment of a student's learning means inference (for example, judgement or estimation or evaluation) of a student's knowledge, skill or competence by comparison with a standard and based on appropriate evidence. This includes self-assessment.

**"Programme"** - A programme of education and training refers to any process by which learners may acquire knowledge, skill or competence. It includes courses of study or instruction, apprenticeships, training and employment. A programme offers learners the learning opportunities by which they may attain educational goals (expressed as the intended programme learning outcome) by learning activities in a learning environment. A programme is normally comprised of modules. A programme leading to a major award will normally require a 'cohesion generating' process which integrates constituent modules so that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes are supported. The cohesion generating process should establish the epistemological and cultural identity of the programme. It should also coordinate alignment of activities with the minimum intended programme learning outcomes and introduce learners to the broader community of practice to which they aspire. (QQI (2013) Assessment and Standards Revised)

**"Extenuating Circumstances"** - Extenuating Circumstances are unexpected factors or emergencies arising close to or during a summative assessment event (normally up to three days in advance) having a material effect on the student's preparation for or performance in that summative assessment task, where the student can provide evidence for them.