

External Adviser Procedure

Approved by:	Effective date:	Next review:
Director of Quality and Standards	October 2024	October 2027

Procedure statement

This procedure sets out the University's requirements for involving an External Adviser in taught course approval and review. It does not cover the appointment of External Advisers for postgraduate research courses.

Who needs to know about the procedure?

- Deans of Faculty
- Heads of School
- Course Directors
- Academic Staff
- Professional Service Staff
- Quality and Standards Office

Purpose of the procedure

The purpose of this document is to set out CCCU's approach to ensuring that external input is sought in the approval and review of its courses, including course design, aims, learning outcomes, clarity, relevance and academic standards.

Contacts

The University Quality and Standards Office is responsible for:

- Providing advice and assistance
- Guidance and templates

The team can be contacted by emailing: QSOEvents@canterbury.ac.uk



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Course Approval and Review process requires that the development of the course(s) should be peer reviewed by an academic External Adviser. This Policy defines the process of their appointment, details the expectation of their role and the administrative aspects involved.
- 1.2. This policy does not cover the appointment of External Advisers for Postgraduate Research Courses.
- 1.3. External involvement should be sought when:
 - 1.3.1. a new Course Approval or Periodic Course Review is undertaken;
 - 1.3.2. major changes are proposed which were not included in the approved course action plan.

2. Selection and Criteria for Appointment

- 2.1. When course developments fall into the categories described above, the Course Director is required to nominate the appropriate externals for approval by the Head of School.
- 2.2. The External Adviser should be an academic staff member in the discipline, but from outside the University, with knowledge of the expectations for quality and standards in UK higher education. This role cannot be filled by an External Examiner.
- 2.3. External Advisers should meet the following criteria:
 - 2.3.1. hold relevant academic qualifications, at least to the level of the proposed course(s) or have significant professional experience;
 - 2.3.2. be familiar with current developments or employer needs in the field of study or thematic specialism for which they are appointed;
 - 2.3.3. for courses with a professional element, they should be aware of the educational requirements for the profession.
- 2.4. In addition, the External Adviser should:
 - 2.4.1. be able to make national comparisons about academic standards;
 - 2.4.2. be familiar with the context for UK regulatory and quality issues;
 - 2.4.3. have understanding and experience of current practice and developments in teaching, learning and assessment in Higher Education, including appreciation of issues relating to diversity of students in higher education and the impact this has on their capacity to learn;

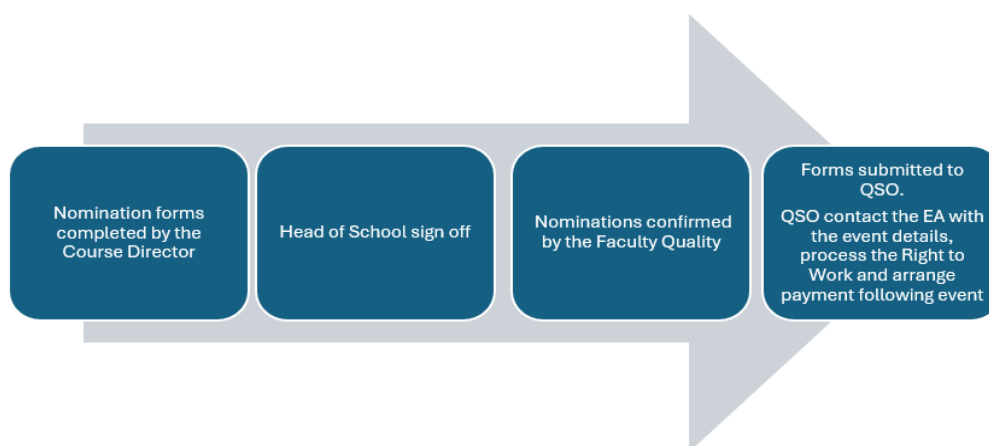
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- 2.4.4. have experience in academic quality assurance – for example, membership of professional accrediting panels, activity as external examiner, awareness of diversity issues in Higher Education.

3. Conflicts of Interest

- 3.1. The University does not appoint as an External Adviser anyone in the following categories or circumstances:
- 3.1.1. a member of a governing body or committee of the University, or a current employee of the University;
 - 3.1.2. anyone involved significantly in current or recent teaching/research collaborations with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, assessment or management of the course(s) for which they are appointed;
 - 3.1.3. anyone who is currently acting as an External Examiner on the Board of Examiners for the course(s);
 - 3.1.4. anyone from the same institution as a current External Examiner on the Board of Examiners for the course(s);
 - 3.1.5. a former member of staff, or former student, unless a period of at least five years has elapsed since their departure;
 - 3.1.6. any members of staff of an Institution accredited by the University;
 - 3.1.7. a member of a governing body of an education partner or branch campus of the University.
- 3.2. Normally an External Adviser will be appointed per course or per a group of cognate courses.

4. Process for Approval of Nominations



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- 4.1. A nomination form should be completed by the Course Director, which is then signed off by the Head of School.
- 4.2. The Faculty Quality Office is responsible for completing final checks and submitting the forms to QSO.
- 4.3. Upon receipt of the nomination form, QSO will complete the Right to Work in the UK check. More information is available on the [Acceptable documents for proving right to work \(canterbury.ac.uk\)](https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/acceptable-documents-for-proving-right-to-work). Should you have any questions, please contact the QSO or the HR team.

5. Induction

- 5.1. On notification that the External Adviser nomination has been fully approved, QSO will contact the External Adviser (normally via an email) to inform them of their appointment, brief them on the University's academic standards and the Academic Framework, outline the expectations and their duties.
- 5.2. QSO will provide the External Advisor with the following:
 - 5.2.1. Course Approval and Review Process documentation;
 - 5.2.2. The New Academic Framework for Taught Courses;
 - 5.2.3. Course, route and module documentation (core and compulsory as well as the relevant Common Curriculum Modules);
 - 5.2.4. Access to the Curriculum Management Tool where applicable;
 - 5.2.5. Proposed timescales for completion of the Course Approval or Review Process.
- 5.3. The Course Director will then also contact the External Adviser with more information regarding the course development and provide context.

6. Role

- 6.1. The appointed External Adviser is expected to attend the course approval event.
- 6.2. Their remit at the event will include:
 - 6.2.1. taking part in discussions on the course design and coherence of the courses, including assessment processes;
 - 6.2.2. considering whether the intended course aims and learning outcomes are realistic, attainable and set at an appropriate level, and if the course is going to provide students with a high-quality learning experience/academic qualification;

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- 6.2.3. considering the clarity of the course documentation and how well this communicates the team's intentions; raising issues concerning the clarity of the course content, the course(s) under consideration; commenting on the relevance of the course content and the assessment strategy etc;
- 6.2.4. advising on the appropriateness of the academic standards set for the course(s) in relation to similar course(s) elsewhere in the UK;
- 6.2.5. raising issues concerning the operational aspects of course delivery in relation to the regulations and general guidelines of the University and, where relevant, professional and regulatory bodies.

7. Exceptional circumstances

- 7.1. In case an External Adviser notifies they are not able to attend, options should be explored regarding revising the date of the event or appointing a new EA. Where not possible, then an exceptional report is expected to be submitted by the EA before the event. This is to ensure the relevant recommendations can be considered at the event.

8. Fees and Expenses

- 8.1. The current External Adviser fees are as below:

Fees	
£225	Half day
£300	Full day

- 8.2. The QSO is responsible for paying fees and expenses for attendance at the event to the External Adviser, which will be stated in the notification of appointment. Fees and expenses cannot be paid until the above submit a claim form to the University. The claim form can be found in the [Payroll forms \(canterbury.ac.uk\)](#) section of the University website.

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