

Annex H.2: External Examiners Policy and Procedures

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1. Scope & Principles

- 1.1. The Guidance for External Examiners details the processes relating to the appointment of External Examiners, for all taught programmes that lead to an award of Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD), and the operation of external examination within the institution.
- 1.2. Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) appoints external examiners for taught provision to ensure that undergraduate and postgraduate taught degree programmes are nationally and internationally comparable in standard and quality.
- 1.3. The Quality Office manages the administration of the external examiner system. Further guidance on External Examining can be obtained from the Quality Office via Quality.Office@nscd.ac.uk
- 1.4. The Purpose and functions of the External Examiner System is:
 - 1.4.1. To assist the School in monitoring the standards of its awards;
 - 1.4.2. To verify that standards are appropriate for the award or award elements which the external examiner has been appointed to examine - such verification will require reference to national subject benchmarks, national qualifications frameworks as well as programme specifications;
 - 1.4.3. To ensure that awards made are comparable in standard with those for similar subjects and awards in other United Kingdom Universities and that the performance of students is consistent with those awards;
 - 1.4.4. To ensure that the assessment processes are appropriate, rigorous, fair and fairly operated and in line with both institutional regulations and published programme guidelines and;
 - 1.4.5. To provide recommendations for, and informative comment on, good practice identified via the external examining system for taught provision, and the enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities provided to students
- 1.5. In order to achieve these objectives, external examiners need to be able:
 - 1.5.1. To participate in assessment processes for the award of degrees;
 - 1.5.2. To arbitrate or adjudicate on problem cases;
 - 1.5.3. To comment and give advice on programme content, balance and structure, on award schemes and on assessment processes.

2. Recruitment

2.1. Criteria for Eligibility

- 2.1.1. External examiners normally hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught programmes at any point in their tenure.
- 2.1.2. External Examiners will need to demonstrate (with appropriate evidence) the following:
 - 2.1.2.1. They have a good understanding of the UK Higher Education sector.
 - 2.1.2.2. They have a high degree of competence and experience in the fields covered by

the programme of study, or parts thereof.

- 2.1.2.3. They have appropriate experience in programme design and student assessment at the level of the award(s) for which they are being nominated.
- 2.1.2.4. They have the necessary academic experience and subject knowledge to assess standards in an effective manner, identify good practice, and recommend enhancements to enable informed course development. (NB - This is not applicable to professional/industry/practitioner External Examiners)
- 2.1.2.5. They have sufficient experience in quality assurance to enable them to discharge their role effectively.
- 2.1.2.6. They comply with all relevant employment legislation, including safeguarding, as appropriate/applicable.
- 2.1.2.7. They have fluency in English, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s) (unless other secure arrangements are in place to ensure that External Examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements).
- 2.1.2.8. They have a minimum of 2 years' experience in the UK. (NB - This is not applicable to professional/industry/practitioner External Examiners)
- 2.1.2.9. For External Examiners engaged to oversee professional or practical elements (for example, professional placements) - Have relevant professional experience.
- 2.1.2.10. For External Examiners of Degree Apprenticeship programmes - Have experience to enable them to oversee the work-based aspects of the programme and assessment.

2.2. Appointment Process

- 2.2.1. NSCD or validated partners will advertise for External Examiners as required. School Faculties are then responsible for recommendations for the appointment of external examiners.
- 2.2.2. Prior to proceeding with the nomination, the programme team checks for possible conflicts of interest such as:
 - 2.2.2.1. A member of a governing body or committee of the appointing body or one of its partners, delivery organisations or support providers, or a current employee of the appointing body or one of its partners, delivery organisations or support providers;
 - 2.2.2.2. Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study;
 - 2.2.2.3. Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study;
 - 2.2.2.4. Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study;
 - 2.2.2.5. Anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question;
 - 2.2.2.6. A former member NSCD staff (within the past 6 years, or where there are still active students who were taught by the nominee);
 - 2.2.2.7. A former NSCD student or graduate (within the past 6 years, or where there are still active students who were taught with the nominee);
- 2.2.3. Once the potential External Examiner has confirmed their willingness to engage,

and it has been confirmed that there are no conflicts of interest, the programme team requests a copy of the nominee's current CV and a scanned copy of the page from their passport showing their photograph and passport number (or other proof of their eligibility to work in the UK). Please note the nominee's CV should include sufficient information to inform a judgement on their suitability.

- 2.2.4. The programme team will then complete the appointment of external examiners form (appendix A).
- 2.2.5. The appointment form, the nominee's current CV, and proof of their eligibility to work in the UK are sent to the Vice Principal at NSCD for consideration and endorsement.
- 2.2.6. Following endorsement by the Vice Principal, the nomination form and supporting documents are submitted to the Quality Office for consideration by Senate. There are three possible outcomes of Senate's consideration:
 - 2.2.6.1. Approval of the nomination, with or without conditions
 - 2.2.6.2. Deferral of the nomination, pending further actions/clarification
 - 2.2.6.3. Rejection of the nomination
- 2.2.7. Following approval by Senate, the Quality Office confirm the outcome to the programme team, and provide the External Examiner with:
 - 2.2.7.1. A letter confirming the details of their engagement
 - 2.2.7.2. Terms and Conditions / Contract
 - 2.2.7.3. Information on applicable school regulations and procedures
 - 2.2.7.4. Details of the mentor for the newly approved External Examiner (if applicable)
- 2.2.8. Following approval by Senate, if a mentoring arrangement has been agreed as part of the nomination, the Quality Office will confirm this to the relevant programme leader and the mentor, along with further information on how the mentoring arrangement should be managed.
- 2.2.9. External Examiners are required to return a signed copy of their Terms and Conditions / contract to the Quality Office. Details of External Examiners' engagement are recorded by NSCD HR department.
- 2.2.10. All External Examiner engagements (except for those covering programmes with non-standard timescales, or those covering newly validated programmes) should be filled by the 1st October each Academic Year. It is important to ensure that all programmes maintain complete, uninterrupted External Examiner coverage, from the programme start date, and then continuously thereafter.

2.3. UK Visa & Immigration Service Requirements

- 2.3.1. The UK VISAs & Immigration Service (UKVI) Immigration Regulations require the school to verify the right to work of any person who undertakes work at NSCD. This is a compulsory requirement, and failure of the school to comply with guidance could result in the NSCD being subject to a fine, being downgraded from a UKVIS Category A rating, or losing its sponsorship license altogether.

- 2.3.2. If a nomination is submitted to the Quality Office without a scan of the appropriate document(s) to show proof of eligibility to work in the UK, the nomination will not be approved by the school.
- 2.3.3. To comply with UKVI requirements, External Examiners are asked to present proof of eligibility to work in the UK, on their first visit to the school, to the Quality Office or HR. Please note that NSCD will be unable to make any payments to External Examiners until their proof of eligibility to work in the UK has been presented in person. If an External Examiner is aware that they will not be visiting NSCD during the first year of their engagement, they should notify the Quality Office so that suitable alternative arrangements can be made to carry out the necessary document checks. This may involve sending original documents via post.

3. Period of Engagement

- 3.1. External examiners are appointed on an annual basis, with a maximum tenure of four years or for the duration of the programme in question where it exceeds four years (re-appointed annually).
- 3.2. Requests to extend an External Examiner's period of engagement should be made in writing by the Head of Faculty to the Quality Office. All requests to extend the period of engagement of an incumbent External Examiner should follow the same approval process as new nominations and approved by Senate.
- 3.3. Where possible, extensions to an External Examiner's period of engagement should not be granted for more than one year. Periods of Engagement may normally be extended for the following reasons:
 - 3.3.1. If the extension provides continuity within External Examiner teams, or if there is reason to allow a period of overlap between incoming and outgoing External Examiners.
 - 3.3.2. If the extension provides continuity following a decision to close the recruitment to a programme.
 - 3.3.3. If the External Examiner has had a period of leave (for example, maternity leave, long-term illness or sabbatical leave) during which alternative examining arrangements have been agreed by the Faculty.
- 3.4. An engagement may normally be terminated by NSCD for the following reasons:
 - 3.4.1. If an External Examiner is not carrying out the minimum requirements of their engagement (as set out in the letter of engagement/Terms and Conditions and in section 5).
 - 3.4.2. If a conflict of interest arises that cannot be resolved.
- 3.5. The above instances will first be brought to the attention of the programme team, the Vice Principal, and the Quality Office. If the matter remains unresolved, the engagement may be terminated. In these circumstances, applications to terminate an External Examiner's engagement should be made in writing to the Quality Office and HR.
- 3.6. Requests to terminate the engagement of an External Examiner follows the same process as nomination and are approved by Senate. Following this approval, the

External Examiner concerned will be informed in writing by the Quality Office.

- 3.7. In line with their Terms and Conditions, if an External Examiner wishes to resign before the agreed end date of their engagement, they must inform NSCD in writing, and a formal acknowledgement is provided by the Quality Office.
- 3.8. Where a programme closes and students have completed the programme of study before an External Examiner's period of engagement is due to end, the External Examiner should be consulted as part of the programme closure process. When closure of the programme(s) is confirmed, the External Examiner will be notified by the Quality Office.
- 3.9. Occasionally, amendments may be made to an External Examiner's engagement, which are purely administrative. Administrative amendments to engagement are amendments which do not materially affect the tasks carried out by the External Examiner, or the nature of the activities associated with their engagement. Such changes may include amendments to programme titles, or codes to the External Examiner's engagement (where the modules and levels associated with the existing engagement remain unchanged).
- 3.10. Administrative amendments are not required to be considered through a formal approval route. External Examiners will receive written confirmation, from the Quality Office, of an administrative amendment to their engagement.

4. Induction Process

- 4.1. All External Examiners who are newly engaged by NSCD are expected to engage with the school's suite of External Examiner Briefing Sessions during the first year of their engagement. These will be held virtually.
- 4.2. The External Examiner Briefing Sessions are facilitated by the school and provide guidance and information on various topics, including:
 - 4.2.1. An introduction to the school
 - 4.2.2. The school's assessment regulations
 - 4.2.3. The operation of Boards of Examiners
 - 4.2.4. The school's Virtual Learning Environment
 - 4.2.5. Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation
 - 4.2.6. External Examiner reports, fees & expenses claims
- 4.3. To supplement centrally delivered training, programme teams are required to facilitate an introductory meeting with their newly engaged External Examiner, to provide programme specific information, including a schedule for moderation activity. This may be combined with the briefing sessions.
- 4.4. Following the commencement of engagement, the Quality Office will liaise with IT to provide an NSCD IT account for External Examiners. It is important that External Examiners activate their IT account within 60 days of issue, and that they continue to access their account at least once every 60 days afterwards. If there is no activity on their account after this period, it will be locked.

- 4.5. NSCD can facilitate External Examiners' access to students assessed work online. Access to this, and to the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), will be arranged and set up by the Quality Office.
- 4.6. Following completion of the first year of their engagement, new External Examiners are asked (in their Annual Report) to comment on their induction to external examining within the school, and to confirm that this was sufficient to prepare them for the first year of their engagement, and to enable them to fulfil their duties.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

5.1. Main Duties and Responsibilities

- 5.1.1. External Examiners approved by the school are allocated to specific programmes. They may be engaged to cover whole programmes, or clusters of modules within their allocated programmes, or multiple programmes. The role of the External Examiner is to provide informative comment and recommendations upon whether or not:
 - 5.1.1.1. The school is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for awards in accordance with national qualifications frameworks (such as the FHEQ, Characteristics Statements, and applicable Subject Benchmark Statements).
 - 5.1.1.2. Offering a high quality academic experience (B1) up to date, challenging, is coherent, effectively delivered and requires students to develop relevant skills and subject knowledge.
 - 5.1.1.3. The assessment process (B4) measures student achievement transparently, rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme(s) and is conducted in line with NSCD policies and regulations.
 - 5.1.1.4. The academic standards are comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions (B4) of which External Examiners have experience.
- 5.1.2. and to provide informative comment and recommendations on:
 - 5.1.2.1. Good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment.
 - 5.1.2.2. Opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students/apprentices.
- 5.1.3. The minimum duties required of all External Examiners are set out in the letter of engagement and Terms and Conditions. In summary, External Examiners are required to:
 - 5.1.3.1. Engage with briefing sessions, facilitated by the school, for all newly engaged External Examiners.
 - 5.1.3.2. Approve all alternative assessments associated with their programme(s) to ensure that students are assessed fairly.
 - 5.1.3.3. Review all failed assessments.
 - 5.1.3.4. Engage with the process of moderation for assessed work, and judge whether students have fulfilled the objectives of the programme, the learning outcomes of the modules and reached the required standard.
 - 5.1.3.5. Be able to compare the performance of students with that of their peers on comparable programmes elsewhere.
 - 5.1.3.6. Ensure that assessments are conducted in accordance with all applicable

regulations.

- 5.1.3.7. Consider and comment on: (i) the effectiveness of the assessments, (ii) the programme and module content, (iii) programme and module amendments, where required.
- 5.1.3.8. Attend Boards of Examiners meetings, usually virtually.
- 5.1.3.9. Ensure that the standard of NSCD awards is upheld and maintained.
- 5.1.3.10. Provide feedback on Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) applications, where required. (*See Annex A.5 for further information*)
- 5.1.3.11. Comment on the mapping for Articulation Proposals, where required.
- 5.1.3.12. Meet with students on their designated programmes at least twice during their period of engagement.
- 5.1.3.13. Report annually to the school on academic standards, assessment and related issues, and on items of good practice, in accordance with the template provided by the school.
- 5.1.3.14. Be responsible for ensuring the security of all personal data that they use or have access to as part of this role.

5.2. Moderation

- 5.2.1. All External Examiners are required to moderate a sample of assessed material from the modules to which they are allocated. The arrangements for moderation activity will be coordinated by the relevant faculty and the Quality Office through in person visits and reviewing student work on the VLE.
- 5.2.2. External Examiners should be informed of the arrangements for moderation at the start of the academic year. In the first year of an External Examiner's engagement, this information should be provided to External Examiners by Schools as soon as possible following confirmation of the External Examiner's engagement.
- 5.2.3. Marks for all coursework will be revealed against student names before External Examiner involvement. Due to the very nature of delivery in small specialist institutions, it is almost impossible for the work to remain anonymous due to tutorials and formative feedback sought/given. However, practical work is often assessed by a panel of experts who do not have this relationship with the students and therefore offer a broader view to the assessment of the work.
- 5.2.4. External Examiners will be required to engage with, and confirm their involvement, in the moderation process.
- 5.2.5. Following each moderation period, hard copies or data recorded work should be returned to the institution once they are no longer required by the External Examiner. Arrangements for this should be made with the relevant Faculty.

5.3. Board of Examiners

- 5.3.1. External Examiners are members of the Board of Examiners for their programme/s. The operation of Boards of Examiners, and the school's expectations with regard to the involvement of External Examiners, both prior to and during Boards of Examiners, are described in Annex G.1.

- 5.3.2. The scheduling of Boards of Examiners is undertaken by the Quality Office and External Examiners should be informed of the dates of Boards of Examiners at the start of the academic year. In the first year of an External Examiner's engagement, this information should be provided to External Examiners by Schools as soon as possible following confirmation of the External Examiner's engagement.

5.4. Meeting with Students

- 5.4.1. It is a requirement that all External Examiners at the school are offered the opportunity to meet with students at least once each academic year. All External Examiners should meet with students at least twice during their four-year period of engagement.
- 5.4.2. Where a physical meeting is not possible (for example, collaborative programmes with overseas or long-distance partners, or distance-taught provision) a virtual meeting with students may be arranged.
- 5.4.3. There is no expectation that External Examiners should act as advocates, either for students or for programme teams. Rather, these meetings are intended to facilitate and encourage an active dialogue between students and External Examiners, and to give them a chance to discuss their experiences on their programme. External Examiners will be asked to comment briefly on this in their reports.

5.5. Amendments to Duties

- 5.5.1. Occasionally, there may be changes to an External Examiner's coverage, for example, a change to the specific programmes or modules that they oversee, assigning additional programmes/modules, or removing programmes or modules. The programme team should consult the External Examiner concerned, before requesting any change to their engagement.

6. Report Process & Guidance

6.1. Overview & Deadlines

- 6.1.1. External Examiners are required to report annually to the school (see Appendix B). Through this process, External Examiners' views are sought on the standards of the awards examined and the comparability of those standards within a UK context. The annual report is designed to capture comments on the academic standards and quality enhancement of assessment based on the external moderation undertaken throughout the academic year. It also invites comments on the effectiveness of the assessment process and features of good practice, as well as covering some programme-specific requirements.
- 6.1.2. External Examiner Reports are integral to the evidence base for monitoring standards and quality within the school. They are considered at Senate and within the School's annual programme monitoring reports.

- 6.1.3. External Examiner Reports are considered public documents and will, subject to any relevant exemption under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and consultation with the External Examiner, be disclosed upon request.
- 6.1.4. External Examiners should consider the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation when completing their reports – see section 9.
- 6.1.5. All External Examiners have the right to raise issues directly with the Vice Principal, and to receive a timely response outlining any actions to be taken. Where an External Examiner has a serious concern relating to systematic failings with the academic standards of a programme(s), and has exhausted all published applicable internal procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the Vice Principal, they may inform the CEO and Principal to escalate matters.
- 6.1.6. The deadline for submission of annual reports to the Quality Office is **4 weeks after the Board of Examiners.**
- 6.1.7. External Examiners who have not submitted their report(s) within one month of the deadline will be sent a reminder letter from the Academic Registry and Quality team. For reports which are not submitted after this initial reminder and are still outstanding three months after the original deadline, a second reminder letter will be sent to the External Examiner by the Quality Office. Failure to respond to the reminders may lead to the termination of the External Examiner's engagement.

6.2. Reports for Partner Programmes

- 6.2.1. Reports for collaborative partner programmes must be supplied on the same template and to the same deadlines as specified above.
- 6.2.2. Where External Examiners are reporting on collaborative provision, where possible, comparisons should be made between the quality, standards and student experience of the collaborative provision, and cognate internal provision.
- 6.2.3. Where External Examiners are reporting on collaborative provision, comparisons should be made between the quality, standards and student experience of the collaborative provision, and cognate provision at their home institution, or other HEIs with which they are familiar.
- 6.2.4. Where External Examiners are assigned both the collaborative programme and a mirror NSCD programme, comparisons should be made between the quality, standards and student experience of the collaborative provision, and cognate provision.

6.3. Reports for multiple programmes of study

- 6.3.1. An External Examiner may report on a cluster of programmes within a single report providing they are at the same level, however, it is important to ensure that it is evident which of these programmes each of the comments relates to.

- 6.3.2. Where an External Examiner is appointed to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes simultaneously, one report should be produced for undergraduate provision, and a separate report should be produced for postgraduate taught provision.
- 6.3.3. Where an External Examiner reports on collaborative provision as well as internal provision, separate reports are required for the collaborative and for the internal provision.

6.4. Guidance for Completing Reports

Level of detail:

- 6.4.1. All sections of the report, applicable to the current engagement, must be completed. As much as possible, a full response should be provided in each section. Very brief responses will be less likely to provide the information needed by NSCD to monitor and enhance its provision.
- 6.4.2. External Examiners should ensure, where possible, that there is a clear reference to the qualitative and quantitative evidence that has informed their feedback.
- 6.4.3. As guidance, it is envisaged that 150-250 words would be sufficient for each free-text response.

Meeting with students:

- 6.4.4. External Examiners are encouraged to ensure that any comments in the External Examiner Annual Report resulting from meetings with students, are set within the broader context of their programme(s), and of their engagement throughout the academic year (i.e. monitoring academic standards and providing informative comment and recommendations regarding quality enhancement).
- 6.4.5. External Examiner Annual Reports, and the associated responses, are made available to all students on the programme through Moodle

Discussions with staff:

- 6.4.6. External Examiners may wish to have wide-ranging discussions with members of the programme team, and, should they wish to record any feedback from this activity in their Annual Report, External Examiners should ensure that comments are set within the context of the questions.
- 6.4.7. Where appropriate, External Examiners should also use the opportunities available to them to provide feedback to the programme team outside the formal annual reporting process.

Guidance on Completing each section of the report:

- 6.4.8. The first page of the reporting template asks the External Examiner to input the

factual details about themselves and the programme.

6.4.9. Standards and Conditions. In this section the External Examiner is asked about Academic experience and standards and are encouraged to make reference to;

- 6.4.9.1. quality of academic experience such as being up to date,
- 6.4.9.2. educational challenge, coherence and knowledge gain, skills development
- 6.4.9.3. effective delivery
- 6.4.9.4. Resources, support and student engagement informed by visits, the VLE, library, facilities, and conversations with staff and students.

The final part of this section is Assessment, in this section, External Examiners are asked to provide a judgement in response to the statements about standards and assessment and should consider:

- 6.4.9.5. if students assessed effectively
- 6.4.9.6. if assessment is relevant, reliable and fair
- 6.4.9.7. if regulations are followed to ensure that relevant awards are credible
- 6.4.9.8. if academic regulations are applied to ensure effective assessment of English language, in terms of the level and content of the course

If an examiner indicates 'No' or feels that they are unable to provide an answer, then an explanation should be provided. In relation to high quality student work, and whether it indicates high teaching standards, External Examiners should give their views on this, and where possible, give evidence for how they have drawn these conclusions.

6.4.10. Good Practice and Recommendations. In this section, the questions are asked with an emphasis on effectiveness, enhancement and good practice.

6.4.11. Board(s) of Examiners (student achievement question 6). In this section External Examiners are encouraged to provide more detailed comments on student achievement coming out of module marking and Board of Examiners.

6.4.12. Institutional Issues (under any other matters question 10). External Examiners are asked to complete this question if they had any serious issues that they would wish to bring to the attention of senior management of NSCD. Such issues may arise where due processes have not been followed. It is suggested that part of this section will only be completed in exceptional circumstances. Whilst welcoming the examiner's objective view, NSCD asks that External Examiners recognise that it is not always possible to modify such things as the regulations in response to individual comments. However, regulations are reviewed periodically and comments from External Examiners are used to inform this process.

6.4.13. Feedback on period of engagement. For External Examiners who are completing their term of office, there is opportunity to add comments about their overall experience as an External Examiner at NSCD (Question 9.). These comments may be used to enhance the provision of support for, and/or interactions with, future External Examiners.

6.4.14. **Academic Experience, Standards and Assessment.** This section asks External Examiners about the core elements of their engagement with their designated programme(s), such as the rigour and transparency of assessment, and comparability of standards. For External Examiners who are practitioners or industry professionals, and not working in Higher Education, it is appreciated that they may not be in a position to provide a judgement on the questions in the 'Academic Experience and Standards and Assessment' section. However, we ask all External Examiners to call on their professional judgements and experiences to make comparisons and an appropriate level and to engage the programme team in dialogue to enable them to make objective judgements.

6.5. Considering & Responding to Reports

6.5.1. The school monitors the content of reports closely. Each report will be responded to by the programme team and Head of Faculty.

6.5.2. Reports are considered at different levels:

6.5.2.1. At Programme and School level, by programme/subject teams and Heads of Faculty who will respond to each External Examiner's report. Where issues or concerns have been raised, replies will detail how these have been or are being considered.

6.5.2.2. At Institutional level, where an overview report on the operation of the External Examiner report process is received by Senate as part of the Annual Programme Monitoring Report. In addition, where External Examiners have raised issues that they feel can only be addressed at institutional level, a response is normally provided by the Vice Principal. Should issues of this nature be raised by External Examiners, they are also considered by Senate.

6.5.3. When External Examiner reports are reviewed at Institution/Faculty level, comparisons should be drawn between External Examiner reports for internal and collaborative provision for cognate programmes, to ensure comparability of academic standards and quality of learning opportunities across internal and collaborative provision.

6.5.4. All External Examiners should receive a timely and comprehensive individual response following submission of their report. This response will be provided via read receipt email.

6.5.5. Programme teams should complete their responses **within 4 weeks of receipt of the report.**

6.5.6. Responses will be made via the designated sections of the report template and must be approved by the Vice Principal prior to being issued to External Examiners.

6.5.7. For collaborative programmes, the responses should be agreed between the Partnership manager, prior to being submitted to the Quality Office and then approved by the Northern School of Contemporary Dance Vice Principal.

6.5.8. For reports which span more than one School/ Faculty, the Partnership manager will liaise to co-ordinate one response per External Examiner report, and this will be submitted to a nominated Head of Faculty. In these instances, responses will be

approved by the leadership (or appropriate delegate) for the owning School and signed off by NSCD's Vice Principal.

6.5.9. It is the responsibility of programme teams to ensure that External Examiner reports and responses are sent to the Quality Office and must ensure that they use the final version.

6.5.10. Programme teams may find it useful to consider aspects of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) while writing their response(s). In their response(s), programme teams should comment on identified features of good practice and positive outcomes, to ensure they are acknowledged and considered in the ongoing enhancement of their programme(s).

6.5.11. Where External Examiners answer one or more of the core questions relating to quality and standards with 'Disagree', or do not feel able to make a judgement for reasons other than those in the above paragraph, further clarification will normally be sought by the Quality Office, in the first instance, and will be addressed through NSCD's annual monitoring and action planning process.

7. NSCD Staff Acting as External Examiners

7.1. In order to ensure the independence of the External Examining process, NSCD's HR keeps up-to-date records of its own staff acting as External Examiners elsewhere. This facilitates the cross-checking of nominations for potential conflicts of interest or reciprocal arrangements. It also facilitates this School's awareness of its own staff acting as External Examiners elsewhere, so that support can be provided, where applicable, and both the school and the relevant staff can benefit from sharing good practice.

7.2. A list of all Northern School of Contemporary Dance staff acting as External Examiners elsewhere is received annually by Senate.

7.3. Before agreeing to undertake the role of External Examiner at another institution, NSCD staff should check for potential conflicts of interest. Members of staff who take up external examining engagements elsewhere, or staff whose period of engagement is extended beyond their original tenure, should notify the Vice Principal and HR immediately. HR will update records accordingly, to ensure that a live record is maintained by the school.

8. Personal Details, Fees & Expenses

8.1. External Examiner personal details

8.1.1. The school holds External Examiners' personal data securely and processes it with care. For full details, please see <https://www.nscd.ac.uk/privacy-notice/staff/>

8.1.2. External Examiners' name, position and institution/workplace will be available to students via the VLE. However, contact information (i.e. email will not be available) and it is made clear in the student handbook that students must not contact the External Examiner. In the event of a student making direct contact with an External Examiner, the External Examiner is advised to refer the query to the Head of Faculty

and this will be considered under NSCD non-academic misconduct policy.

8.2. External Examiner Fees

- 8.2.1. A nominal fee is paid for undertaking moderation work at the school. This fee will be stated in the External Examiner contract and reviewed annually.
- 8.2.2. When amending the duties of an External Examiner, Faculties are permitted, under certain circumstances, to propose payment of an additional fee.
- 8.2.3. The annual fee is paid by the school on receipt of the completed fee claim form (Appendix C), which should be submitted alongside the completed External Examiner Report.
- 8.2.4. External examiners are normally regarded by HMRC as self-employed and individual external examiners should make a declaration of any such income on their self-assessment returns. NSCD will not deduct Income Tax or National Insurance from the payment for the external examiner's fee and expenses. The only circumstances where Income Tax or National Insurance may be deducted is when an external examiner acts for NSCD on multiple occasions during the same academic year or is not elsewhere in a contract under PAYE scheme with another HEI.
- 8.2.5. In accordance with UK immigration regulations external examiners are considered to be employees of NSCD because they are paid a fee for the work they undertake, even though they are not issued with formal contracts of employment. These requirements apply to all external examiners, not just those from outside the UK. In order to ensure that NSCD complies with UK Home Office requirements it is necessary for all external examiners to provide proof of their right to work in the UK. NSCD will not be able to reimburse any expenditure by external examiners if the necessary documentary proof has not been provided in accordance with UKVIs requirements (see section 2.3).
- 8.2.6. The current platform used by NSCD to make international payments does not allow for payments to be routed via an intermediary bank. Only direct payments can be facilitated.

8.3. External Examiner Expenses

- 8.3.1. The School will pay reasonable UK-based expenses incurred by external examiners as a consequence of moderation work, providing the expenditure was incurred within the academic year in question.
- 8.3.2. All claims for expenditure must be submitted on the External Examiner Claim form (Appendix C) and signed by the external examiner before being forwarded to the Quality Office for certification and approval.
- 8.3.3. NSCD reserves the right to amend or withdraw this policy at any time, at the discretion of the Executive Leadership Team. All expenses claims are subject to NSCD's normal audit procedures in accordance with its financial regulations.

- 8.3.4. With the exception of mileage claims, reimbursement will only be paid on production of receipts for all items. In most cases, credit card slips do not contain this information and are not acceptable, and therefore other receipts must be supplied.
- 8.3.5. NSCD will reimburse expenditure in accordance with the Travel and Subsistence Policy, which will be made available to External Examiners upon request.

9. GDPR

- 9.1. The school collects, stores and processes a wide range of data about individuals during its day to day business, and the use of personal data is an integral aspect of many of the school's activities.
- 9.2. External Examiners should be aware of the school's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation, and also of their own responsibilities. External Examiners are responsible for the personal data that they process as part of their role. The school's Data Protection Officer can be contacted by email at dataprotection@nscd.ac.uk
- 9.3. All External Examiners and staff (including those engaged in the marking of examination scripts) have a duty to ensure that they comply with the data protection principles (set out in the and should note the following:
 - 9.3.1. Marks, comments and opinions expressed by an External Examiner about individual students during the assessment process may be disclosed to the student concerned, if the student makes a Subject Access Request under the Data Protection Act/General Data Protection Regulation.
 - 9.3.2. Comments by External Examiners about an individual, both internal and external, whether made on the coursework or in another form that allows them to be held and applied to the original submission are covered by the Act.
 - 9.3.3. Should a student request to see the External Examiner's comments, they may be made available. A data subject has the right to request that a copy or summary 'in intelligible form' of information about them is provided within the stipulated timescale (see below).
 - 9.3.4. All External Examiners need to be aware that the school may be obliged to make their comments available (upon formal request) to individual students. To ensure compliance and to simplify the process, should requests be made, Examiners are advised to write their comments on a separate sheet which they should upload to Moodle.
 - 9.3.5. Where Examiners' comments have been made directly onto coursework the annotated page itself is exempt in the event of a Subject Access Request (though may be provided at the discretion of the school). However, if an annotated piece of coursework is withheld, all comments must be reproduced onto a separate form, which is available to the subject as a minimum requirement.
 - 9.3.6. All Examiners should be reminded that their comments will be provided to students if requested, and should therefore ensure that all comments can be justified and that no careless remarks are made on coursework, in emails/correspondence to colleagues, or on mark sheets. Any informal notes passed between Examiners in the course of marking an examination script or piece of coursework should be disposed of securely once the final mark has been agreed and there is genuinely no need for the notes to be retained.

- 9.4. Staff, including External Examiners, are advised that examination board minutes can include the personal data of individual students and therefore may be accessible to students on request, with other student details redacted.
- 9.5. External Examiners should consider the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation when completing their reports, and must not refer to students, staff, or other External Examiners by name, nor include matters of a confidential/sensitive nature. Matters of a serious, sensitive or confidential nature, or matters which reflect concerns about standards of assessment and performance (particularly if it is felt that this jeopardises either the fair treatment of individual students or the quality or standards of NSCD awards) should be conveyed separately to the Quality Office.
- 9.6. Please be reminded that these reports are shared with students, colleagues, and, if required, other organisations. Therefore, External Examiners should ensure that completed reports do not include:
 - 9.6.1. Individual names of staff and students.
 - 9.6.2. Any information by which an individual could be identified, or by which they could identify themselves.
 - 9.6.3. Any information which is potentially sensitive or confidential.
- 9.7. If an External Examiner Report is submitted which reflects a programme with less than 3 students, programme teams should contact the Quality Office for further advice, and the report should not be shared more widely/with students in its original form.
- 9.8. All requests for personal information must be directed to the dataprotection@nscd.ac.uk without delay and should be dealt with in accordance with school's Privacy Notices: <https://www.nscd.ac.uk/privacy-notices/>. standard response time for requests is 1 month, but may, in limited circumstances, be extended to three months.
- 9.9. Any requests received by the school for the disclosure of External Examiner reports, or the personal information of External Examiners, will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

