

Policy name: Overall External Examiners and Specialist External Examiners Policy

Approved: 25th November 2016

Revision 1 approved 10th March 2017

Revision 2 approved 5th October 2018

Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020

1. Context

- 1.1 All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by the Royal Irish Academy of Music, hereinafter referred to as RIAM or the Academy, are delivered by RIAM and validated by the Designated Awarding Body, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, hereinafter referred to as Trinity. RIAM's External Examiners policy is informed by, and compliant with, the terms of Trinity's External Examiner Policy.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy ensures a transparent, consistent and equitable external examining system that meets the requirements of Trinity, as the Designated Awarding Body, and is aligned with the Quality and Qualifications Ireland: Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining.
- 2.2 This policy covers the appointment, procedure and obligations of RIAM and its External Examiners.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to the external examining of all taught and research programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level at the Academy.
- 3.2 This policy covers the arrangements for the appointment of External Examiners, their duties and the procedures they are required to follow, and the obligations of RIAM towards them.

4. Benefits

- 4.1 A principal outcome of external examining is the introduction of an independent element into the procedures for the assessment of learners. An external examiner is an independent expert who is a member of the broader community of practice within the programme's field of learning and whose accomplishments attest to his/her likelihood of having the authority necessary to fulfil the responsibilities of the role.
- 4.2 This policy:
- (i) ensures that the quality of the content, organisation and assessment of the Academy's programmes is maintained and enhanced;
 - (ii) benchmarks the Academy's teaching and learning to that of comparable institutions of higher education;
 - (iii) promotes and enhances the standard of the Academy's processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards.

5. Principles

- 5.1 RIAM is responsible for the quality assurance of its teaching, research and related services.
- 5.2 External examiners provide a valuable and objective perspective that contributes to the quality assurance of the Academy's taught and research programmes.
- 5.3 RIAM will appoint at least one external examiner for each of its programmes, to ensure that sufficient expertise is available to cover all areas of the syllabus under assessment.

6. Definitions

- 6.1 **External Examiners (Overall and Specialist – see below)** are individuals appointed to provide impartial and independent advice on degree awarding standards and on student achievement in relation to those standards. They are drawn from academia and also from appropriate and relevant business and professional environments. For research dissertations and theses, the external examiner must be recognised as an independent expert in the candidate's field of study.
- 6.2 **Specialist External Examiners** are contracted each year to assess the Academy's performance examinations in each instrument or instrument family.
- 6.3 The **Associated Colleges Degrees Committee (ACDC)**, set up in partnership between Trinity and RIAM, oversees all RIAM programmes validated by Trinity College Dublin in terms of academic quality

7. Policy

7.1 The Role of Overall External Examiners

- 7.1.1 Overall external examining assists RIAM in ensuring the standards of attainment, as follows:
 - (i) the academic standard for each award and award element is set and maintained at the appropriate level and that student performance is properly judged against each programme's regulations;
 - (ii) the assessment process measures student achievement against the regulations and intended outcomes of the programme appropriately, and is equitable and fairly operated;
 - (iii) the Academy is able to compare the standard of its awards and the attainment of students against the National Framework of Qualifications and with those of other higher education institutions.
- 7.1.2 As their core duties, RIAM asks overall external examiners to report on:
 - (i) whether the standards set are appropriate for the awards by reference to the National Framework of Qualifications and programme specific information;
 - (ii) the standards of student performance in the programme and the comparability of the standards achieved with those of similar programmes in other higher education institutions;
 - (iii) good practice, opportunities for enhancement and areas for improvement;

- (iv) moderate on borderline cases in all classes of award;
- (v) the extent to which the Academy's processes for assessment, examination, and the determination of awards are sound and have been fairly conducted.

7.1.3 In order to carry out these responsibilities, the overall external examiner must:

- (i) be able to judge each student impartially on the basis of performed and written work submitted for assessment;
- (ii) be able to compare the performance of students with that of their peers on comparable programmes elsewhere;
- (iii) be entitled to request access to all assessed work;
- (iv) ensure that assessments are conducted in accordance with the approved programme regulations;
- (v) be properly briefed on their role, the programme and RIAM's expectations of students on the programme;
- (vi) produce an annual report.

7.2 Duration of Overall External Examiners' Term

- 7.2.1 The duration of an examiner's appointment for taught programmes shall normally be three years.
- 7.2.2 Requests for an extension of appointment for one further year are only made in exceptional circumstances and submitted to the Chair of the RIAM ACDC for consideration.
- 7.2.3 Examiners for taught programmes may not be re-appointed unless at least six years have elapsed since the end of their previous appointment.
- 7.2.4 The term of appointment for examiners of research theses (in the doctoral programme) is to the point of completion of the process, which may be up to two years if work is referred for major corrections.
- 7.2.5 Examiners of such research theses (in the doctoral programme) may not be appointed until at least five years have elapsed since the end of their previous appointment
- 7.2.6 An external examiner may be discharged from his/her appointment at any time during the term if he/she fails to adequately perform the role and responsibilities, as provided for in this policy, or if conflicts of interest arise during the term.

7.3 Rights and Responsibilities of Overall External Examiners

- 7.3.1 In relation to examiners for Taught Undergraduate and Postgraduate Programmes:
 - (i) Internal first marking of examination scripts and course work will be subject to a process of moderation by a second internal marker or through group meetings. Unresolved inconsistencies in marking between first and second markers (where

group meetings are not used) will result in moderation of all the papers by the External Examiner.

- (ii) Examiners will be provided with a representative selection of the examination scripts and course work proposed for the highest, median and lowest available categories of the award. All failed assessments will be reviewed by the External Examiner. The selection of student work will normally relate to each programme and cohorts of the course, but must include samples of each year which contributes directly to the final award.
- (iii) The role of the examiner is to moderate the scripts and course work to establish that students are placed fairly in relation to the cohort, cross-faculty, and examining standards applied elsewhere.
- (iv) In addition to the selection of material provided for them, examiners have a right of access, on request, to all assessed work of a student or course unit. All coursework will be scanned and stored until Examiners have concluded their review and for failed units until after the eligible appeals period has passed.
- (v) Scripts will be retained for 13 months after RIAM's Board of Examiners and are subject to the RIAM Records Management and Data Protection Policies, in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (Data Protection Bill 2018).

7.3.2 In relation to overall external examiners for performance examinations (see also 8.5 below in relation to specialist external examiners for such examinations):

- (i) They are invited to attend a sample of the main performance examinations for the award.
- (ii) They are expected to attend a reasonable proportion of final recitals or their equivalent.
- (iii) The precise proportion will be determined in any one year in discussion with the Chair of the Board of Studies.
- (iv) Other than in the final year of a Programme, they do not participate personally in examining performance examinations. In other years, their role in a performance examination will be to observe the recitals and the marks awarded.
- (v) If Examiners have an immediate concern about the conduct of any performance examination which cannot be resolved with the Chair of that Panel, they should contact the Chair of the Board of Studies directly and immediately.
- (vi) They are specifically asked to comment on the standards of performance examination that they attend in their written annual report.

7.3.3 In relation to examiners for postgraduate research dissertations/theses, Masters and Doctoral:

- (i) Determine if a dissertation/thesis submitted for a Master's degree shows evidence of rigour and discrimination, appreciation of the relationship of the subject to a wider field of knowledge, and makes a contribution to knowledge/scholarship.

- (ii) Determine if a thesis submitted for a Doctoral degree shows evidence of rigour and discrimination, appreciation of the relationship of the subject to a wider field of knowledge, and makes an appreciable, original contribution to knowledge, as well as showing originality in the methods used and/or conclusions drawn;
- (iii) Conduct *viva voce* examinations for all doctoral candidates.
- (iv) Propose that, in the case of a Doctoral degree:
 - the degree be awarded for the dissertation as it stands; **or**
 - the degree be awarded for the dissertation subject to minor corrections, for which two months are allowed from the time of notification; **or**
 - the dissertation be referred for major revision and subsequent re-examination, for which six months are normally allowed from the time of notification; **or**
 - a lower degree be awarded, if necessary, following minor corrections to the dissertation, **or**
 - the dissertation should be failed.
- (v) Inform the Chair of the Board of Studies that requested corrections have been carried out satisfactorily if nominated to do so in the case of two External Examiners being appointed, one of which has been assigned the functions of the internal examiner.
- (vi) Submit the report of the examination (including the *viva voce* if held) within eight weeks of the completion of examining duties.

7.3.4 In relation to meetings of Boards of Examiners

- (i) Overall external examiners are expected to attend all relevant meetings of the Board of Examiners at which final awards are decided. They participate as full members.
- (ii) At every Board of Examiners meeting that considers final awards, there will be consideration of every student and their result, although only those cases requiring fuller discussion will be raised. At the conclusion of the consideration of results they will be deemed to be formally ratified by all members of the Board of Examiners, including the overall external examiners, present at the meeting. A formal statement to this effect will be included in minutes of meeting.
- (iii) In the unavoidable absence of all overall external examiners for a programme, the results will be considered by the Board of Examiners, but must be sent to and discussed with at least one such examiner prior to formal ratification. Their absence from the meeting will be noted in the minutes together with the mechanism adopted to ratify the results.
- (iv) Overall external examiners are expected to moderate the marks awarded by internal examiners. They do not, however, have a right of veto when commenting on the setting of examination papers, when moderating examination scripts or course work, or at meetings of the Board of Examiners.

- (v) Overall external examiners have a right to expect that views which they express in meetings will be taken seriously and will receive a specific response. If such an examiner is not satisfied with a response or does not receive one, he or she has a right of direct access to the Director, who will seek to resolve the issue (calling on the Chair of the Board of Examiners as necessary). If a resolution cannot be achieved, the issue will be considered directly by the Board of Studies.

7.4 Contact with Overall External Examiners and Remuneration

- 7.4.1 The chief point of contact with examiners after formal appointment is the Administrative Officer, Registry. Contact concerning remuneration and reimbursement of expenses should also be through the Administrative Officer, Registry.
- 7.4.2 With regard to External Examiners for Postgraduate research dissertations/theses, Masters and Doctoral students, there should be no contact between the examiner and the student in order for the process to be unbiased. Communication with the examiner should only be undertaken by the person with responsibility for organising the viva, the Coordinator for Doctoral Academic Studies.
- 7.4.3 Examiners will be remunerated in accordance with the annually-reviewed rates set by RIAM, which will pay reasonable travel and subsistence costs, including standard class rail and air travel (supported by receipts).

8. Procedures

8.1 Procedure for the Appointment of External Examiners

- 8.1.1 The Administrative Officer, Registry, will notify the Board of Studies that a nomination is required twelve months in advance of the date when a vacancy will arise.
- 8.1.2 The Board of Studies will identify a suitable nominee, drawing on Trinity's External Examiners Policy on eligibility.
- 8.1.3 The Administrative Officer, Registry, will make an informal approach to nominee to ascertain their willingness to be appointed and to obtain a CV.
- 8.1.4 This nominee shall be put before the RIAM ACDC for approval at the next available meeting with a view of that nomination being subsequently approved by the Trinity Senior Lecturer or Dean of Graduate Studies (as appropriate), and noted by the Trinity University Council.
- 8.1.5 Once the nomination has been noted by the Trinity University Council, the Director will send an appointment letter to the external examiner.

8.2 Criteria for the Approval of Overall External Examiner Nominations

- 8.2.1 The following criteria (8.2.6 - 8.2.13) for the appointment of examiners are used by the Board of Studies when considering examiner nominations and are intended to complement Trinity's External Examiner Policy.
- 8.2.2 They also provide a check-list of issues to be considered when considering nominations.

- 8.2.3 The Board of Studies may exceptionally request the RIAM ACDC to waive a criterion, on the basis of an individual case. An example of this is if an examiner has recently retired from his/her institution and no longer has a current post (see 8.2.7).
- 8.2.4 A number of the criteria relate to contacts the examiner might have had in the past with the programme, the professors teaching on the programme as visiting lecturers.
- 8.2.5 They exist to ensure that the impartiality of the examiner can never be called into question.
- 8.2.6 An examiner's academic and professional qualifications should be appropriate to the programme to be examined. Both the level and the subject of the examiner's competence and experience should generally match what is to be examined in the programme.
- 8.2.7 An examiner should have sufficient seniority, expertise and experience to maintain comparability of standards and meet the applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies. Standing, expertise and breadth of experience may be indicated by:
- (i) the present post and place of work;
 - (ii) the range and scope of experience across higher education in music or the music profession;
 - (iii) current and recent active involvement in research, scholarly, or professional musical activities.
- 8.2.8 An examiner should have enough recent external examining or comparable related experience to indicate competence in assessing students. If the proposed examiner has no previous external examiner experience at the appropriate level, the application should be supported by:
- (i) extensive internal examining experience;
 - (ii) other relevant and recent experience likely to support the external examiner's role.
- 8.2.9 Examiners should be drawn from a wide variety of institutional and professional contexts and traditions in order that the programme benefits from wide-ranging external scrutiny. There should not be:
- (i) more than one examiner from the same institution in the team of external examiners;
 - (ii) an examiner from an institution which has been the source of external examiners to RIAM in the recent past (normally five years), unless the association of the individual concerned is modest (for example a part-time teaching post).
- 8.2.10 Examiners should not be over-extended by their external examining duties. The examiner should not normally currently hold more than the equivalent of two substantial undergraduate external examiner's appointments.

- 8.2.11 Examiners should be impartial in judgement and should not have previous close involvement with RIAM which might compromise objectivity. Over the last five years preceding nomination, the proposed examiner should not have been:
- (i) a member of staff, a Board of Governors' member, a student, or a near relative of a member of staff on the programme;
 - (ii) an overall external examiner on another programme in the Academy;
- 8.2.12 In relation to a research dissertation/theses:
- (i) the external examiner should be a recognised independent expert in the candidate's field of study;
 - (ii) the external examiner should not be a collaborator in the candidate's research;
 - (iii) the external examiner should not be a recent graduate of RIAM or Trinity, i.e. within the past ten years;
 - (iv) external examiners should not have any existing or recent relationships with RIAM or Trinity, members of its staff or students, that could call their impartiality into question.
 - (v) Trinity's Dean of Graduate Studies is to be consulted prior to approaching the nominee if they are not from a Third Level Educational Institution.
- 8.2.13 Other than for mutually agreed causes, in the rare circumstance that RIAM is not satisfied with the performance of an overall external examiner, for example because of the non-submission of an examiner's report or because he or she is not abiding by the moderation role of an external examiner as referred to below, the relevant Chair of the Programme Committee will send a written report of the situation to the Director, who will discuss it with the Chair of the Board of Studies. If the Chair of the Board of Studies believes that the situation cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the Chair will seek approval of the RIAM ACDC to terminate the external examiner's appointment and a fresh appointment will be sought.
- 8.3 Procedure for Overall External Examiner Reports:
- 8.3.1 Overall external examiners are required to provide a formal written report, addressed to the Director, via the Administrative Officer, Registry, on the effectiveness of the assessments and related issues at the end of each annual cycle of examinations.
- 8.3.2 The report is in two parts: a pro-forma of questions (see Appendix 1, Section 13 of this document) and a qualitative report.
- 8.3.3 The completed report, when received by the Administrative Officer, Registry, will be acknowledged formally, and will then be copied to the Director, the Chair of the Board of Studies, and appropriate Chair of the Programme Committee before being presented to the relevant Programme Committee for the determination of actions to be taken by RIAM in response to the report as part of the annual course monitoring report.
- 8.3.4 In liaison with the Chairs of the Programme Committees, or other nominated academic member of staff, the Administrative Officer, Registry, will respond to the

examiner report to inform them of action taken to address the issues raised in his/her report.

- 8.3.5 If an examiner wishes to raise a matter of particular importance or sensitivity he or she may, exceptionally, submit a written report to the Director.
- 8.3.6 External examiners' reports are securely retained by the Academy (in accordance with its records retention policy) and contribute to both quality assurance/enhancement and institutional research activities.
- 8.3.7 RIAM will make its Overall External Examiners reports available to each programme's students.

8.4 RIAM's Obligations towards Overall External Examiners

- 8.4.1 In addition to obligations already specified in the foregoing, the Administrative Officer, Registry, will provide or facilitate services for examiners as set out in 8.4.2 – 8.4.6 below:
 - 8.4.2 To brief and provide induction for newly-appointed external examiners, including a briefing from a senior member of academic staff. This will include ensuring that external examiners know the names, contact details and specific roles of the relevant Chair of Programme Committees and Head of Faculty as appropriate. It also includes the provision of up-to-date course handbooks, syllabuses, notes for examiners, general academic regulations, and RIAM's Equality and Diversity Policy and related information.
 - 8.4.3 To consult in advance with Heads of Faculty in drawing up an appropriate sampling timetable for performance examinations, combining cases which are expected to be at the extremes and mid-point of the marking range, whilst preserving freedom for external examiners to access other cases on a random basis so as to ensure adequate sampling of the entire cohort.
 - 8.4.4 To provide opportunities for meetings with representatives of students and representatives of course teams.
 - 8.4.5 To arrange dates for Boards of Examiners' meetings with external examiners;
 - 8.4.6 To provide guidance on the structure of annual reports.
 - 8.4.7 To communicate to stakeholders as per QQI guidance, the name and primary occupation of the external examiner(s) for each of its higher education and training programmes.

8.5 Procedure for External Specialist Examiners

- 8.5.1 A number of specialist external examiners are contracted each year to assess the Academy's performance examinations in each instrument or instrument family (for instance, a pianist for an organ examination).
- 8.5.2 The criteria for recruitment and the appointment of specialist external examiners must follow the procedures outlined above, but with some differences, as follows:

- (i) Specialist external examiners are nominated by Heads of Faculty and approved by the Board of Studies of RIAM. They do not go via the RIAM ACDC to the Trinity University Council for approval.
- (ii) Specialist examiners provide a report for each performance examination they mark which will be available to the student for feedback.
- (iii) Specialist external examiners are not required to attend the Board of Examiners.
- (iv) A specialist examiner may be contracted to examine in their instrumental family in every year except the degree awarding years, where a specialist in the instrument must attend.
- (v) Specialist external examiners are required to provide a formal written report to the Administrative Officer, Registry, on the effectiveness of the assessments and related issues at the end of each annual cycle of examinations.
- (vi) This report, when received by the Administrative Officer, Registry, will be acknowledged formally, and circulated to the relevant Head of Faculty for utilisation in the annual programme monitoring process.

9. Responsibility

- 9.1 The Chair of the Board of Studies is responsible for overseeing this policy. The Head of the Administrative Office (Registry) is responsible for its operating procedures in relation to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

10. Legislation and Regulation

- 10.1 [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#).
- 10.2 [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2005\)](#).
- 10.3 [Code of Practice for Provision of Education and Training to International Learners \(2015\)](#).
- 10.4 [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#).
- 10.5 [European General Data Protection Regulation \(May 2018\)](#).

11. Related Documents

- 11.1 Trinity [External Examiner Policy](#) (section 7.8, External Examining of Programmes Delivered by Collaborative Partners).
- 11.2 Advisory Guidelines on European General Data Protection Regulation.

12. Document Control

Approved by Board of Studies 25th November 2016.
Revision 1 approved by Board of Studies 10th March 2017.
Revision 2 approved by Board of Studies 5th October 2018.
Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020.
Next review: Academic year 2020/21.

Appendix 1: External Examiner Pro Forma Report

Name:

Year of appointment:

Name of University/affiliated institution:

Programme title:

Module(s):

Instrument(s):

Please comment under the seven headings below on any aspect which you consider relevant [please use a continuation sheet if necessary]:

1. Was the information and evidence provided to you in advance of carrying out your duties sufficient to enable the role to be fulfilled? Please make reference to the provision of course handbooks and assessment guidelines.
2. Standards set in assignments, quality of candidates, the pass rates and the distribution of results:
3. The marking schemes and assessment procedures adopted:
4. The module content:
5. Any aspects worthy of special commendation:
6. Any examples of good practice relating to the area you have examined to which you would like to draw attention:
7. Have the recommendations from the previous year's report been adequately addressed? (where relevant.)
8. Are there any other comments you wish to make:

Signed:

Date

Appendix 2: GUIDANCE TO EXTERNAL EXAMINERS ON GDPR AND DATA PROTECTION OF STUDENT ASSESSED WORK

Student exam scripts, recordings and coursework are regarded as personal data under the EU General Data Regulation (25 May 2018).

External Examiners should take appropriate measures to ensure electronic copies of student exam scripts, recordings or coursework are encrypted or if not encrypted, are stored locally on one computer and not on any internet service such as Dropbox. Latest and most secure versions of software available including anti-virus software and disk encryption and strong logon passwords is strongly recommended to mitigate risk of unauthorised access. If there is a concern of unauthorised access, this should be reported to RIAM within 72 hours.

The RIAM may provide a password to access encrypted data. The password should be saved in a secured place and disposed of after accessing the data or on completion of examination duties.

If hardcopies of exam scripts or coursework is printed, they should be disposed of in a secure manner or returned to the RIAM for safe disposal at the time of the Court of Examiners.

In the case of a research thesis a student's written consent is required if the examiner wishes to retain a copy of the thesis beyond the examining period, this will be included in the declaration section of the thesis.



Appendix 3: ANNUAL EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT

(Trinity College Dublin, The University of Dublin template)

Course details:

Academic Year examined	Choose an item.
Programme/Course/ Strand being examined (in full)	
Module or Subject title/code (in full)	
Course levels examined (UG or PGT)	Choose an item.
Specify years	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 st <input type="checkbox"/> 2 nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3 rd <input type="checkbox"/> 4 th <input type="checkbox"/> 5 th <input type="checkbox"/> PGT
Mode of delivery (Face to Face or Online)	Choose an item.

Extern details

Name	
Home University/Institution	
Year Appointed	Choose an item.
Year of current term (Yr1, Yr2, Yr3, Extended Yr4)	Choose an item.
Date(s) of Visit	

A1: Did you receive all the necessary information on the aims, objectives and structure of the programme/course? [*These would generally be provided in the Course or Programme Handbook and include module descriptors and learning outcomes; marking schemes and examination conventions; criteria for the award of Gold Medals (UG only)*]

Yes No

A2.1: Where written examinations form a component of the assessment, did you receive the draft examination papers?

Yes No Not applicable

A2.2: Where you made recommendations on draft examination papers, were these acted upon?

Yes No Not applicable

A3: Did you have access to all scripts and assessment work that you wished to see?

Yes No

A4: Where the conduct or moderation of oral examinations, performances/recitals forms part of the programme/course or module you were examining, were suitable arrangements made to facilitate your attendance?

Yes No Not applicable

A5: Was the Court of Examiners' meeting conducted to your satisfaction?

Yes No if no, please comment

Comment:

A6: Did you seek the opportunity to speak to students or to review feedback provided by students on the programme/ course/module that you are examining?

Yes No

Section A: Additional comments on External Examiner Arrangements (*optional*)

Section B: Curriculum Design, Assessment, Standards

B1: Your comment is sought on the **curriculum design and content** including strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.
[Coherence and content of the curriculum as compared to similar programmes/courses elsewhere; extent to which programme/module learning outcomes addressed skills and competencies as well as knowledge]

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B2: Your comment is sought on the **assessment tools** used and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.
[Standard and scope of questions/problems set in examination papers and formative assessment; appropriateness of assessment methodology to achievement of learning outcomes, balance of formative and summative assessment]

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B3: Your comment is sought on the **quality and standard of marking and feedback** and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.

[Standard and appropriateness of marking criteria used; consistency of marking; clarity and transparency of the marking scheme and internal examiners' comments; quality of feedback to students]

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B4: Your comment is sought on the **assessment of UG Capstone Projects/PG dissertations** and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/ improvement.

[Appropriateness of choice of research topics; marking scheme and criteria; quality of submitted work; appropriateness of the assessment methodology, opportunities to attain the graduate attributes].

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B5: Your comment is sought on the **standards of the programme/course/ module and performance of students** and may include strengths, weaknesses and/or opportunities for further development/improvement.

[Academic standards and achievements of students i.e. (i) quality of candidates, pass rates; (ii) compared to other higher education institutions, of which you have had experience; (iii) If applicable, compared with previous years].

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B6: Where the mode of delivery is **wholly online**, your assessment of the online learning environment is requested in terms of i. ease of access ii. ease of navigation iii. optimisation of teaching, learning and assessment via the web including opportunities for social interaction and collaboration with peers.

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B7: Your comment is sought on any other specific aspect of the programme/course/module(s) that you wish to highlight as an example of good practice or that you would like to see disseminated more widely e.g. curriculum resources.

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Section B. Additional comments on Curriculum Design, Assessment and Standards (*optional*)

Section C: Feedback/Quality Assurance

C1: Your feedback is sought on whether your recommendations from previous years have been implemented and if you received communication that they have been addressed.

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C2: If applicable, please provide feedback on the resourcing of the programme/course /modules.

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Section D: Collaborative or Transnational Provision (if applicable)

D1: If collaborative and transnational arrangements are applicable to the programme/course/module you are examining, please comment on the **assessment and the achievement** of students in different sites.

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External Examiner electronic signature.....

Date of submission.....

External examiner email address.....

For Office use only

Date received by Senior Lecturer/Dean of Graduate Studies:/.../20....

Date reviewed by Senior Lecturer/Dean of Graduate Studies:/.../20....

Deans' comments including actions required by School in response to External Examiner recommendations:

Reviewer signature:

NOTES TO COMPLETING THE ANNUAL EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT

External Examiner Annual Reports contribute to the quality assurance of teaching and learning i.e.

- i. inform internal quality assurance activities by programmes and schools;
- ii. inform reviews of Trinity programmes and schools by College and by professional and statutory accreditation bodies;
- iii. inform institutional level quality assurance and enhancement of Trinity by Quality & Qualifications Ireland and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

External Examiners are asked to:

- i. complete all sections of the report template, as appropriate;
- ii. return the completed annual report within eight weeks of completion of duties for the external examining period
- iii. include in the report, key recommendations discussed and agreed at the Courts of Examiners for improvement at programme, course or module level.
- iv. email the completed report to the externreports@tcd.ie mailbox and include **UG** or **PGT** in the subject line of your email to facilitate the dissemination of the report to the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies /Senior Lecturer or the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate.
- v. confirm by signature in Section E of the annual report that they have safely disposed of or returned to the School for safe disposal hard copy documentation; and/or deleted electronic files provided to them to facilitate completion of external examination duties (refer [Advisory Guidelines on EU-GDPR](#)).

We thank you for your commitment to College in your role as External Examiner.

Dean of Undergraduate Studies/ Senior Lecturer