



**UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON**

Handbook for Examinations

Online and distance learning programmes (University of London Worldwide)

On-campus programmes (School of Advanced Study)

Distance Learning research degrees (School of Advanced Study)

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Definitions

For the purposes of this document, the University of London Worldwide will refer to the central administration of the University of London, which, in collaboration with the federation members of the University, offers a suite of online and distance learning programmes leading to a University of London award.

The School of Advanced Study refers to the central administration of the University of London which offers postgraduate taught and postgraduate research programmes leading to a University of London award.

Please email all queries, including requests for additional copies of the Handbook for Examinations, to examiner.contract@london.ac.uk

An electronic copy of the Handbook for Examinations can be found on the University of London website at the following address: <https://london.ac.uk/support-examiners>

University of London

Handbook for Examinations

<i>Scope and Terminology</i>	1
<i>Recent changes</i>	1
Part 1: Boards of Examiners and Conduct of Assessment	2
1 Constitution of Boards of Examiners	2
1.1 <i>Reporting Lines and Terms of Reference</i>	2
1.2 <i>Composition and Function</i>	2
1.3 <i>Membership</i>	2
The University of London will appoint Board of Examiner members, following receipt of nominations from federation members or the School of Advanced Study. This will happen in a timely manner and in advance of any members' duties to the Board. Examiners cannot begin their work until appointed.	2
Module Leaders for Track C / Standard Academic Model Programmes are appointed to the Board of Examiners.	3
2 Categories of Examiner and their Duties	4
2.1 <i>Chair/Deputy Chair of the Board of Examiners</i>	4
2.2 <i>External and Intercollegiate Examiners</i>	7
2.3 <i>Chief Examiners</i>	7
2.4 <i>Examiners</i>	8
2.5 <i>Associate Examiners</i>	8
2.6 <i>Assessors</i>	9
2.7 <i>Assistant Examiners</i>	9
2.8 <i>Module Leaders (For Track C / Standard Academic Model programmes only)</i>	9
2.9 <i>Online Tutors (For Track C / Standard Academic Model programmes only)</i>	9
3 Nomination and Appointment of Examiners	11
3.1 <i>Procedures for the Appointment of Examiners</i>	11
3.2 <i>Number of Examiners to be Appointed</i>	11
3.3 <i>Conditions of Appointment</i>	11
3.4 <i>School of Advanced Study External Examiners</i>	12
4 Conduct of Examinations	15
4.1 <i>Schemes of Award and Assessment Criteria</i>	15
4.2 <i>Examination Papers</i>	15
4.3 <i>Source Materials and Calculators</i>	16
4.4 <i>Vivas and Oral Examinations</i>	17
4.5 <i>Marking</i>	18
4.6 <i>Illegible Examination Scripts</i>	19
4.7 <i>Missing / Lost Examination Scripts</i>	20
4.8 <i>Corrupt or blank files</i>	21
4.9 <i>Meetings of the Boards of Examiners</i>	22
4.10 <i>Determination of Results</i>	23
4.11 <i>Communication protocols</i>	24
4.12 <i>Mitigating Circumstances</i>	24
4.13 <i>Awards made in exceptional circumstances</i>	25
4.14 <i>Representations from Candidates</i>	26
4.15 <i>Suspension of Regulations</i>	26
4.16 <i>Assessment Offences</i>	27

4.17 <i>Examiners' Commentaries</i>	27
4.18 <i>Alerting the University to concerning content within an examination paper</i>	27
Part 2	29
Section 1: Reporting lines and Terms of Reference for University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study Boards of Examiners	29
Section 2: External and Intercollegiate Examiners appointed to University of London Boards of Examiners and External/Intercollegiate Examiner Annual Report Form	30
11. <i>Short Course/Stand Alone Module Examiners</i>	35
Section 3: Schemes of Award and Assessment Criteria for programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study	37
Section 4: The Appointment of Associate Examiners to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners	39
Section 5: Procedures for the Management of University of London Board of Examiners	40
<i>Status of University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study Boards of Examiners</i>	40
<i>Role and Duties of the Secretary to the Board of Examiners</i>	40
<i>The Agenda</i>	41
<i>Documentation</i>	41
<i>Minutes</i>	42
<i>Reporting the Board's decisions and recommendations</i>	43
Section 6: Academic Appeals	44
<i>General</i>	44
<i>Procedure</i>	44
Appendix 1: Code of Practice for Examiners when Teaching Students under Private Arrangements	45
Appendix 2: Register of Interests: Policy and Procedures for considering Conflicts of Interest	47
<i>Background</i>	47
<i>Definition</i>	47
<i>Declaring conflicts of interest</i>	47
<i>Categorisation of Conflicts</i>	48
<i>Managing the Register of Interests: Examiners' returns</i>	48
<i>Procedure</i>	49
<i>Evidence that conflicts of interest give rise to concern</i>	49
<i>Investigation of conflicts of interest giving rise to concern</i>	49
<i>Penalties</i>	49
Appendix 3: The Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles	50

Scope and Terminology

The information contained within the document refers to policies and procedures for managing summative assessment. For advice on managing different assessment types not described here please consult with the Director of Student Services (Student Experience), University of London Worldwide and/or the Chief Executive Officer, School of Advanced Study.

The Handbook for Examinations applies to all online and distance learning programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide and on-campus postgraduate taught programmes offered through the School of Advanced Study. For some programmes different arrangements from the normal procedures apply. Where this is the case, the different arrangements are clearly highlighted in the appropriate section of this document.

Track C / Standard Academic Model programmes

The following programmes (including any specialisms, pathways and constituent parts) fall under this category for the 2025-26 academic year onwards:

- BSc Business Administration (online taught)
- BSc Computer Science
- BSc Marketing (online taught)
- BSc Psychology
- Global MBA
- MSc Accounting and Financial Management
- MSc Computer Science
- MSc Cyber Security
- MSc Data Science
- MSc Global Environment and Sustainability
- MSc Marketing
- MSc Professional Accountancy
- MSc Project Management
- MSc Supply Chain Management and Global Logistics
- PGCert International Sports Management
- PGCert Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

Recent changes

- Incorporation of the School of Advanced Study to make the Handbook for Examinations applicable to UoLW and SAS.

Part 1: Boards of Examiners and Conduct of Assessment

1 Constitution of Boards of Examiners

1.1 Reporting Lines and Terms of Reference

1.1.1 University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study Boards of Examiners should be constituted according to **Section 1: Reporting lines and Terms of Reference for University of London Boards of Examiners**.

1.2 Composition and Function

1.2.1 Federation members¹ may adopt one of four options for the composition of University of London Boards of Examiners:

- Model A (traditional), in which all Examiners are expected to mark scripts and may attend meetings of the Board of Examiners.
- Model B (standardised), in which the Board devolves responsibility for ensuring the appropriate assessment of individual papers, courses or modules to Chief Examiners.
- Model C (standardised), in which the board devolves responsibility for the planning and implementation of appropriate marking, second marking and moderation processes on a course or module to a Course/Module Leader.
- Model D, in which membership is made up of examiners from Tier 1 boards², which comprise the individual programmes and/or consortium that contribute to the programme and to which marking responsibility is devolved. The Tier 2 Board of Examiners³ will agree on matters concerning progression and award.

1.2.2 The Terms of Reference for the Board should record the model adopted, together with any agreed minor variations.

1.3 Membership

The University of London will appoint Board of Examiner members, following receipt of nominations from federation members or the School of Advanced Study. This will happen in a timely manner and in advance of any members' duties to the Board. Examiners cannot begin their work until appointed.

1.3.1 The membership of the Board of Examiners comprises

- the Chair
- the Deputy Chair
- the External Examiner(s)/Intercollegiate Examiner(s)

¹ Reference to federation members in this document include the federation members that collaborate with the University of London Worldwide to deliver distance and flexible learning programmes leading to a University of London award. For some of these programmes, federation members work together in arrangements such as the Undergraduate Laws Consortium and the Postgraduate Laws consortium.

² Tier 1 boards are responsible for a suite of courses/modules specific to a particular programme or programmes of study and will confirm the mark awarded for each course/module.

³ A Tier 2 board has oversight of a student's whole record and authority to determine overall outcomes based on the confirmed marks provided by the Tier 1 boards.

- the Chief Examiners (if appointed)
- the Examiners
- the Associate Examiners (if appointed).

1.3.2 Assistant Examiners and Assessors may be appointed to assist Boards of Examiners if their appointment is consistent with federation member policy. They are not members of the Board and they do not have voting rights.

1.3.3 Associate Examiners (Examiners from outside the University of London) should be appointed, if consistent with the federation member policy, when the specific nature of a programme calls for expertise from a wider pool of Examiners than is available within the University.

Module Leaders for Track C / Standard Academic Model Programmes are appointed to the Board of Examiners.

2 Categories of Examiner and their Duties

Examiners are responsible for their duties as outlined in their contract. For those examiners responsible for marking scripts, once the marking of examination scripts is fully completed and the marks agreed, scripts (and any accompanying paperwork or separate marking sheet) must be forwarded promptly to the University of London Worldwide Digital Assessments and Logistics Office before the Exam Board meets, or, where instructed, to the Chair of the Board of Examiners, for onward dispatch to the Exams Digital Assessments and Logistics Office.

2.1 Chair/Deputy Chair of the Board of Examiners

- 2.1.1 The Chair and Deputy Chair of a Board of Examiners shall be a Professor, Reader or Teacher of the University unless, after consideration of a reasoned statement justifying exceptional treatment, other arrangements are determined.
- 2.1.2 The Chair and Deputy Chair should have expertise and experience of examining federation member-based students of the University and should not be the Programme Director.
- 2.1.3 The Chair of the Board of Examiners has the duty, and the authority, to:
 - ensure that all Examiners/Assistant Examiners/Assessors required to take part in assessment are nominated by the relevant federation member or Subject Panel;
 - determine the overall distribution of work between members of the Board of Examiners, including External/Intercollegiate Examiners and Assistant Examiners/Assessors if appointed;
 - request specific Examiners or Assessors to attend the final meeting of the Board of Examiners in order to ensure that all subject areas being assessed are represented;
 - exercise a casting vote, in addition to his/her own vote, if the Board is unable to reach a decision concerning a candidate's results;
 - take action on behalf of the Board, after such consultation as he/she deems appropriate, on any matters of urgency;
 - direct arrangements for the preparation of examination papers to ensure the fair and equitable treatment of students and limit any possible allegation of unfair advantage by subsets of students (see 4.2.4 – 4.2.6). In the event of concern, the Chair should consult the Senior Quality Officer in the federation member and the Director, Student Registry Services at the University of London Worldwide/ Chief Executive Officer as SAS.

Track C / Standard Academic Model only: In the event of any concern, the Chair should consult the Head of Academic Quality, University of London.

- 2.1.4 The Chair of the Board of Examiners is responsible for the following areas:

a. Paper setting and return of papers

- ensuring that question papers are set for all assessments by Examiners or Chief Examiners (if applicable) by the set deadlines
- ensuring that separate papers are set for different time zones, where this has been agreed;

- ensuring that the setting of question papers has satisfied federation member procedures and that all papers have been approved by an External/Intercollegiate Examiner;

Track C / Standard Academic Model only: ensuring that the setting of question papers has satisfied University of London Worldwide procedures;

- ensuring that all papers are scrutinized and submitted to the University of London by specified deadlines, ensuring timely despatch to examination centres;
- agree with the University of London the wording to appear in the *Notice to candidates* which is sent to candidates regarding permitted materials.

b. Marking of scripts and return of marks

- ensuring that newly appointed examiners are fully inducted into the University of London's assessment policies and procedures.
- setting a timescale by which marking and moderation must be completed and marks moderated by External/Intercollegiate Examiners are returned to the University of London in good time for the Board of Examiners meetings.
- assigning Examiners into pairs appropriately for the purpose of double marking and ensuring that the performance of pairs of Examiners is consistent;

Track C / Standard Academic Model only: ensuring that all items of assessment are marked, sampled and moderated in line with the Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles;

- ensuring that all Examiners are provided with information to enable them to reach sound decisions, in accordance with agreed procedures for the assessment of students;
- ensuring that agreed marks are consistent across any assessment which is marked by a number of different examiners;
- ensuring that all marks returned are recorded as percentage marks, irrespective of the allocation of marks used;
- ensuring that adequate procedures have been followed to guarantee that all parts of scripts have been marked and correct totals recorded;
- ensuring that all scripts have been marked and their marks returned to the University of London;
- reporting alleged assessment offences, including plagiarism in coursework, or anomalies in examination answer scripts (for example, suspected collusion), promptly to appropriate federation member or Programme contacts. (see paragraph 4.16);
- ensuring that a representative selection of scripts is made available after second marking to the External and Intercollegiate Examiners;
- completing any duties resulting from the administrative re-check of marks (see section 4.13);
- performing any of the duties of a Chief Examiner where no appointment to that position has been made and which are not covered by other members of the board (see paragraph 2.3.1).

c. Board of Examiners Meeting

- overseeing the arrangements for meetings of the Board of Examiners;
- ensuring that the Board has all necessary documentation at its disposal;
- asking Board members to declare any conflicts of interests and recording them in the minutes;
- ensuring that the Board of Examiners carries out its duties and responsibilities in a proper and impartial manner and in accordance with programme regulations;
- ensuring that procedures governing mitigating circumstances and borderline performances have been considered fairly and equitably across all candidates;
- retaining, on behalf of the Board, responsibility for all decisions and action taken and not taken;
- ensuring all decisions affecting the final result of students are taken in consultation with the External/Intercollegiate Examiner(s), particularly including any business delegated to the Chair for action after the final Board meeting;
- co-ordinating the Board's participation procedures for considering and responding to External and Intercollegiate Examiners' Reports

Track C / Standard Academic Model only: co-ordinating the Board's participation in University of London Worldwide procedures (as detailed in the Quality Assurance Schedule) for consideration and responding to External and Intercollegiate Examiners' reports;

- ensuring that the Board reviews candidates' overall performance across papers and compared with previous years;
- ensuring that all assessment for which the Board is responsible has been carried out and that this has been done to the same standard as assessment for federation member-based Students in equivalent programmes or cognate subject areas (where such programmes exist) and is comparable with standards at a national level;
- ensuring that minutes of Board meetings are taken, that they cover all necessary detail accurately, and that they are agreed and distributed as necessary in a timely manner;
- ensuring a record of precedents is kept for future years.

d. Additionally, to:

- provide an induction and provide programme materials to new External Examiners;
- consider and confirm any changes to the timetable of examinations for a candidate/ group of candidates;
- perform duties relating to the process for handling illegible scripts (see section 4.6);
- perform duties relating to the process for missing or lost scripts (see section 4.7);
- perform duties relating to procedure for consideration of representation concerning decisions of Boards of Examinations. See **Section 6: Representations concerning decisions of Boards of Examiners.**

- agree to membership, where required, of the University of London panel which considers and agrees special examination arrangements;
- consider credit for prior learning that may be awarded to candidates, particularly with regard to credit transfer from University of London federation members;

2.1.5 The Chair may call for the administrative support of University of London Worldwide and/or federation member colleagues, according to the individual arrangements agreed for each programme, and delegate, where appropriate, in order to fulfil his or her responsibilities. **See Section 5 Procedures for the Management of University of London Worldwide Board of Examiners.**

2.1.6 Chairs of Boards of Examiners (and their deputies) will be appointed annually and may serve for a maximum period of four consecutive years, after which they shall not normally be eligible for re-appointment until after a lapse of two further years.

2.1.7 A Deputy Chair shall be appointed to each Board of Examiners. The Deputy Chair's role is to fulfil the Chair's duties and responsibilities, as set out above, in the absence of the Chair. S/he may also be required to perform additional duties and provide support to the Chair.

2.1.8 In the case of the appointment of joint Chairs to the Board, joint responsibility for the Chair's duties shall be assumed and the Chairs will deputise for each other.

2.2 External and Intercollegiate Examiners

2.2.1 External and Intercollegiate Examiners must be appointed, and their reports submitted and considered, according to **Section 2: External and Intercollegiate Examiners appointed to University of London Boards of Examiners and External/Intercollegiate Examiner Annual Report Form.**

2.3 Chief Examiners

2.3.1 Chief Examiners appointed to Boards have specific responsibility for ensuring that assessment in a particular question paper or papers is conducted to a consistent standard. In particular, Chief Examiners must co-ordinate:

- paper-setting;
- script marking;
- assignment of marking duties to Examiners/Assessors and nominating additional examiners as required;
- determine marking duties and to nominate additional Examiners for dissertations and dissertation proposals if those assessments form part of a programme's Quality Assurance schedule;
- sampling scripts;
- review of marginal scripts;
- where a dissertation module forms part of a programme's Quality Assurance schedule, the Chief Examiner will additionally review a sample of submissions, review feedback on dissertations and dissertation proposals as appropriate and also to provide feedback on any ethics form submission;
- resolution of significant differences between first and second markers;

- consistency of standards in marking, normally through standardisation meetings at which all Examiners assigned to the paper are present;
- attendance at meetings of the Board of Examiners;
- production of Examiners' Commentaries (a form of generic examination feedback which is made available, with past papers, to students to help them prepare for the examinations). See 4.17 for further information.

2.4 Examiners

2.4.1 Examiners are appropriately qualified and experienced serving members of academic staff of the University of London, including all its federation members. They are sometimes called Internal Examiners.

2.4.2 Examiners appointed to Model A Boards participate in setting and marking work for the purpose of assessing candidates and may be expected to attend any meetings of the Board held to determine the outcome of examinations. See 1.2 above.

2.4.3 Examiners on programmes which include a dissertation or dissertation proposal assessment element may be required to review and provide feedback on both dissertation proposals, dissertation submissions, review and provide feedback on ethics form submissions if appropriate, propose alternative dissertation topics if required. These duties will be advised by the Chief Examiner;

2.4.4 Examiners appointed to Model B and C Boards participate in the assessment of candidates, which can include: setting coursework and written exam papers; assessing student work and assigning marks using the published marking criteria and marking scales; providing students with feedback on their work. They have the right, but not the duty, to attend meetings of the Board.

2.4.5 Examiners appointed to Model D Boards may have already participated in setting and marking work for the purpose of assessing candidates under a Model A or Model B Board. They have the right, but not the duty, to attend meetings of the Board.

2.4.6 Examiners have a duty to ensure consistency of marking across the scripts they mark.

2.4.7 Comments recorded by an examiner about the performance of a candidate in an examination, whether on the script or elsewhere, may be personal data and so available to a student making a subject access request (see paragraph 4.5.11).

2.5 Associate Examiners

2.5.1 Associate Examiners are appropriately qualified and experienced colleagues who are not serving members of academic staff of the University or a federation member, who may be appointed to fulfil the standard role of Examiner (or Chief Examiner if appropriate). They have the same rights and duties as Examiners but their appointment is recorded in a separate category for reasons of transparency. Please see **Section 4: The Appointment of Associate Examiners to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners**. Membership of the University of London Examination Boards, other than Track C / Standard Academic Model, should include a preponderance of examiners drawn from the federation member.

2.6 Assessors

- 2.6.1 Assessors are specialists who may be appointed to assist Boards of Examiners in setting papers in special subjects, or in special aspects of the main syllabuses, to mark scripts and to attend practical examinations.
- 2.6.2 Assessors are not members of Boards of Examiners and do not have voting rights. They are not entitled, unless invited, to attend meetings of the Board.

2.7 Assistant Examiners

- 2.7.1 Assistant Examiners are appointed to assist in marking scripts at examinations where there are large numbers of candidates taking written papers or practical examinations. Assistant Examiners may be required to attend practical examinations.
- 2.7.2 Assistant Examiners are not members of Boards of Examiners and do not have voting rights. They are not entitled to set papers but should be encouraged, or may be required, to attend meetings of the Board.

2.8 Module Leaders (For Track C / Standard Academic Model programmes only)

- 2.8.1 As part of the Module Leader role, Module Leaders have responsibility for ensuring that assessment in a particular question paper or papers is conducted to a consistent standard. Module Leaders will:
 - set all assessments which includes (depending on the module) the exam paper, coursework question(s), model answers, project assessment and the associated marking guides in accordance with University of London Worldwide guidelines;
 - lead the Examiner Team for the Module and attend internal marking meetings and Board of Examiners; provide a final report to be incorporated into the Module review.
 - ensure the Online Tutor receives the coursework question(s), marking guidelines, marking timetable and marking sheet at the beginning of each session and is familiar with the assessment marking process.
 - be the Moderator for the Module in line with the Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles which includes producing a short report for the External Examiner on the standards applied in first and sample marking by coursework item, examination and project. The moderation and sample marking process can be found in **Appendix 3: The Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles**.
 - provide regular forum posts on overarching student performance in the module
 - within a module, the role of Module Leader is mutually exclusive from the role of Online Tutor and/or examiner/marker.

2.9 Online Tutors (For Track C / Standard Academic Model programmes only)

- 2.9.1 The duties/responsibilities of Track C / Standard Academic Model Online

Tutors include:

- to provide dedicated online feedback and marking of all items of coursework for the module:
 - for up to 50 web-supported students per Module (as per Module Leader's Marking Guide) or 100 web-supported students per Module in the case of Computer Science.
 - for students studying at a University of London Recognised Teaching Centre, subject to demand.
- to assign provisional marks using the published marking criteria and marking scales;
- to ensure marking across all scripts is consistent and aligns with the programme's marking scheme.

2.9.2 All comments and feedback recorded by an Online Tutor about the performance of a candidate in a coursework, whether on the script or elsewhere, may be requested by a student making a subject access request (see paragraph 4.5.11).

3 Nomination and Appointment of Examiners

3.1 Procedures for the Appointment of Examiners

- 3.1.1 The appointment of examiner process is managed by the Academic Contractors Manager. The process for nomination and specific lines of responsibility are defined in Section 4 of the appropriate Quality Assurance Schedule⁴.
- 3.1.2 Information and rules concerning the role, nomination and appointment, fees and expenses, provision of information and duties of External/Intercollegiate Examiners and Associate Examiners can be found at: **Section 2: External and Intercollegiate Examiners appointed to University of London Boards of Examiners and External/Intercollegiate Examiner Annual Report Form** and **Section 4: The Appointment of Associate Examiners to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners**.

3.2 Number of Examiners to be Appointed

- 3.2.1 The number of Examiners appointed to any Board shall be sufficient to ensure the efficient conduct of the examination and its assessment. Normally, Boards should include a majority of Examiners who are employed by federation members of the University and have experience of examining federation member-based students.
- 3.2.2 Sufficient External Examiners should be appointed, in terms of the number of scripts assessed and the range of subject areas covered, to ensure that the process of External Examining is properly carried out. If more specific federation member guidelines are in place concerning the number of External Examiners to be appointed, these guidelines should be followed.

3.3 Conditions of Appointment

- 3.3.1 Appointment as an Examiner and payment of fees, where the University of London Worldwide is responsible for the payment of fees, will only be made on submission of the acceptance of appointment and Register of Interests, payroll details (where appropriate) and satisfactory evidence of your right to work in the UK. See also, the contract for services. No work, including paper-setting, is to be allocated unless the required documentation has been received.

Register of Interests

- 3.3.2 The University of London has an obligation to ensure that conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived, do not arise. The Register of Interests is intended to protect the University, the federation members and the individual staff members concerned.
- 3.3.3 For reasons of transparency, the University shall hold a Register of Interests and on acceptance of appointment. All Examiners will be required to disclose details of any relationship with an independent teaching centre or centres, or membership of any University, University of London or federation member Board or Committee they may have, or any instance that may compromise the examining process, for example close personal or family relationships.
- 3.3.4 In completing the return for the Register of Interests it is expected that any

⁴ <https://london.ac.uk/about-us/academic-quality/quality-assurance-schedules>

potential conflicts of interest, which may not be explicitly questioned on the form, will be disclosed. Guidance on this issue may be requested from the Head of Academic Quality, University of London.

- 3.3.5 The Register of Interests must be completed and returned even if there is nothing to declare.
- 3.3.6 In the event that the status of any individual submission changes, the Examiner must notify the Head of Academic Quality, University of London, at the earliest opportunity so that their Register of Interests can be updated.
- 3.3.7 Examiners are reminded of their responsibility to declare potential conflicts of interest to the Board of Examiners separately.
- 3.3.8 Please see also **Section 2: External and Intercollegiate Examiners appointed to University of London Boards of Examiners and External/Intercollegiate Examiner Annual Report Form, para. 2.3, Appendix 1: Code of Practice for Examiners when Teaching Students under Private Arrangements and Appendix 2: Register of Interests: Policy and Procedures for considering Conflicts of Interest.**

Right to Work in the UK

- 3.3.9 The University of London is required by law to ensure that examiners have the right to work in the UK where they claim permanent domicile in the UK. The Academic Contractors Manager will ask examiners to provide satisfactory evidence of their right to work and reside in the UK before any work is undertaken, or any payment made, even if evidence has already been provided to a federation member of the University of London.

3.4 School of Advanced Study External Examiners

- 3.4.1 Nomination and appointment of External Examiners to the School of Advanced Study shall be made in adherence to the following:
 - a) only persons of seniority and experience who are able to command authority should be appointed;
 - b) an external examiner should not normally be appointed from a department in an institution where a member of the inviting institution is serving as an examiner, although exceptions may on occasions be unavoidable; for example, in the case of subjects taught only in a very small number of institutions
 - c) former members of staff shall not be appointed at their former institutions before a lapse of at least three years or sufficient time for students taught by that member of staff to have passed through the system, whichever is the longer.
- 3.4.2 Persons invited to act as external examiners will be invited to advise the School if they have any connections with any candidate on, or member of academic staff involved with, the relevant course, which would make it desirable for their appointments to be reconsidered.
- 3.4.3 External examiners will be appointed annually. After service for a period of not more than four (normally consecutive) years, or, in exceptional circumstances, for such limited extension of this period as the AQSC shall determine he/she shall not be eligible for re-appointment until after a lapse of two further years.

3.4.4 External examiners wishing to resign during their period of office should write formally to the Dean, giving sufficient notice for the appointment of a replacement.

3.4.5 The termination of an external examiner's appointment during his/her period of office shall rest with the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman of the Collegiate Council. This power shall only be exercised after consideration of a formal report on which the Chairman of the Board of Examiners and the Chairman of the AQSC shall have had the opportunity to comment. Grounds for such termination shall include that criteria for appointment are found to have been breached, and failure to fulfil duties in a timely way. Duties and reporting

3.4.6 The duties of external examiners include the requirement that they have regard to the totality of a degree programme and that they be involved in and particularly influential in the decisions relating to the award of every degree. The external examiner(s) does/do not have the power of veto. The Board of Examiners, in reaching a decision which is at variance with the view of the external examiners(s), must be confident of the grounds for its decision and its minutes must provide a reasoned explanation for such decision. If an external or intercollegiate examiner is not able to endorse the Board's decisions the chair of the Board and the external examiner shall make written statements to the Vice-Chancellor, who will assess and if possible resolve the issue.

3.4.7 External examiners' reports should assess at least the following:

- a) the aims and objectives of the programme of study and the appropriateness of these to the level of the award to which they lead;
- b) the suitability of methods of teaching and the adequacy of teaching as indicated by students' performance in examination (including coursework or continuous assessment);
- c) the suitability of examination methods to the aims and objectives of the programme of study;
- d) the appropriateness of marking schemes for each element of assessment, of overall marking schemes for the programme and/or of schemes for the award of Distinction and Merit;
- (e) the fairness and impartiality of assessment procedures;
- (f) the standard of internal marking in the various modes of study included in the overall examination of the programme of study;
- (g) compliance with the regulations (e.g. on double marking, blind marking, approval of question papers and dissertation titles);
- (h) the comparability of standard of programmes of study and of standard of assessment with equivalent programmes and assessment in the same or similar disciplinary areas in the UK (or, in the case of intercollegiate examiners, comparability with Colleges of the University), or such other comparison as may be appropriate.

3.4.8 External examiners are additionally invited to highlight areas of good practice with a view to enhancing the School's programmes generally.

3.4.9 External examiners are required by the University to send their reports to the University within 15 days of the final examiners' meeting.

3.4.10 The reports of external examiners are sent to the Directors of the relevant

Institute/Centres. It is expected that the Institute/Centres will share these reports with at least the student representatives, and ideally with all students. The Institute/Centre Director, or nominee, will formally respond to the External Examiners' reports outlining where action has been taken and/ or where action is still required and what is proposed. External Examiners' reports and responses are considered through Institute/Centre academic meetings prior to being taken through the School of Advanced Study Annual Programme Planning and Review (APPR) process and AQSC will receive the resulting Annual Programme Report (APR) and an annual summary of all External Examiners' reports, responses and areas of good practice across the School. Where AQSC is not satisfied with the action taken or proposed to be taken by an Institute/Centre in response to a report, it may suggest further action under Section 6.10 of the [School of Advance Study Quality Assurance Framework](#) or, if the urgency and importance of the matter warrants it, may proceed under Section 6.16 of the School of Advance Study Quality Assurance Framework.

4 Conduct of Examinations

4.1 Schemes of Award and Assessment Criteria

- 4.1.1 There must be an agreed award scheme and assessment criteria, in accordance with **Section 3: Schemes of Award and Assessment Criteria for programmes offered through the** University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study in place for every degree and they must be applied.
- 4.1.2 The University of London Worldwide, the federation member, the School of Advanced Study and Boards of Examiners for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees should ensure that the award scheme makes provision for the award of the appropriate class. Boards of Examiners for Intermediate awards⁵, Diplomas and Masters degrees must ensure that there is an agreed scheme for the award of Credit, Merit and Distinction where the Programme Regulations make provision for the award of these classes.
- 4.1.3 The University of London Worldwide, the federation member, the School of Advanced Study and Boards of Examiners should ensure that there is an agreed scheme for the award of any exit qualifications associated with the degrees for which it is responsible.
- 4.1.4 Schemes of Award and assessment criteria should be approved by the appropriate body, as identified in the Quality Assurance Schedule⁶, or by the Institute and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) in the School of Advanced Study in advance of the examinations. These are made available to members of the Board of Examiners, Assessors and Assistant Examiners

4.2 Examination Papers

- 4.2.1 Question papers, appropriately scrutinised and approved by the External or Intercollegiate Examiners, must be prepared and submitted to the University by the set deadlines.
- 4.2.2 Examiners are required to preserve absolutely the security and confidentiality of examination papers at all stages until the papers have been sat by the candidates (see **Appendix 1: Code of Practice for Examiners when Teaching Students under Private Arrangements**). The contents must not be disclosed to any persons other than members of the Board of Examiners or officials of the University except where the University has specifically approved the disclosure to candidates of the topics to be covered in specific papers before the examination.
- 4.2.3 It is a condition of the appointment of every Examiner that the University shall, without payment, be licensed to reproduce sufficient copies of examination papers (or material contained therein) prepared by the Examiner for the University, either alone or in collaboration with others, for the purpose of conducting the examination. The University shall also have the exclusive licence thereafter to publish the paper(s) as a whole provided that the University shall not assign or transfer this exclusive licence in any way to any other person.

⁵ Intermediate awards include: Certificate of Higher Education (named or unnamed), Diploma of Higher Education (named or unnamed), Postgraduate Certificate (named or unnamed), and Postgraduate Diploma (named or unnamed).

⁶ QA Schedules for each federation member and consortium are available online at: <https://london.ac.uk/about-us/academic-quality/quality-assurance-schedules>

- 4.2.4 There must be no reasonable case that could be advanced where a subset of students has been unfairly advantaged through arrangements which might inadvertently provide information about an examination paper which is not equally available to all students entered for the same examination.
- 4.2.5 It is acknowledged that programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide are characterised by a wide variation between programmes in student numbers and models of interaction of staff and students. Consequently, there is likely to be variation across these programmes in the measures which are judged to be necessary to ensure that no subset of students could be unfairly advantaged. Therefore, Chairs of Boards of Examiners and Chief Examiners are charged with making arrangements for the preparation of exam papers that implement this aim (see **Appendix 1: Code of Practice for Examiners when Teaching Students under Private Arrangements**).
- 4.2.6 In the event that a Chair of Board of Examiners (or Chief Examiner) has any doubt as to the robustness of arrangements to ensure a subset of students has not been unfairly advantaged, the Chair should consult the Director Student Registry Services and, where appropriate, the appropriate federation member Senior Quality Officer.
- 4.2.7 Appropriate scrutiny of question papers must be completed by each Board to ensure that no errors appear in the rubric or content of the paper. The scrutiny process must also guard against, and seek to ensure, there is no significant overlap in different question papers sat by the same candidate within corresponding subject areas.

4.3 Source Materials and Calculators

- 4.3.1 The use of source materials and calculators in examinations is restricted by General Regulations⁷ and in some case by Programme Regulations.
- 4.3.2 If the Regulations for the relevant programme permit the use of source materials in the examination room, the Board of Examiners is authorised to specify precisely what materials are to be provided or permitted. Such materials may not include dictionaries for the specific purpose of enabling students to overcome any deficiency in their command of the English Language.
- 4.3.3 If source materials are to be provided to candidates, Boards of Examiners must agree any proposals having financial implications with the Executive Director, University of London Worldwide or the Chief Executive Officer, SAS.
- 4.3.4 Boards of Examiners (and, where appropriate, aligned with federation member regulations) are authorised to determine whether, and in which examinations, candidates are permitted to use their own electronic calculators.
- 4.3.5 The University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study must ensure that all candidates are informed about permitted materials and calculators through the Notice to Candidates.
- 4.3.6 Examiners shall ensure that question paper rubrics include details of permitted materials and permitted calculators and also the requirement that candidates state clearly on their scripts the name and type of calculator used.

⁷ Refer to *Rules for taking written examinations*, section 6 of the General Regulations:
<https://london.ac.uk/current-students/programme-documents/regulations>

4.4 Vivas and Oral Examinations

Vivas

- 4.4.1 Some programmes require students to undertake a viva. This is indicated in the Programme Specification for University of London Worldwide programmes, or in the [Research Handbook for SAS](#).
- 4.4.2 Vivas shall be conducted by no fewer than **two** Examiners acting together. For University of London Worldwide programmes one Examiner **must** be an External or Intercollegiate Examiner. For SAS Programmes, Examiners must be external to the Institute at which the candidate is studying, **one** Examiner can be sought from other Institutes of SAS but must have had no previous association with the candidate's work, the **second** Examiner, and any further Examiners, must be External.
More examiners may be appointed to ensure that all aspects of a project or dissertation are comprehensively examined.
- 4.4.3 No-one (including External Examiners) may attend a Viva except the Examiners appointed for that viva and the candidate. Access to all recordings is restricted to the use of the Examiners of the Viva.

Oral examinations

- 4.4.4 The General Regulations (for University of London Worldwide programmes) and the QAF (for SAS Programmes) also make provision for oral examinations to be conducted as part of the marking process, where questions of authorship arise during the standard marking processes.
- 4.4.5 Oral examinations will usually take place online.
- 4.4.6 Oral examinations shall usually be conducted by two academics involved in the delivery of the programme. At least one will have academic direction responsibilities, such as a Programme Director, and at least one shall have subject specific knowledge of the element of assessment under examination. The same person can fulfil both roles above, but must still be accompanied by a second academic from the programme.
- 4.4.7 Candidates will be given advanced notification of the oral examination, usually no less than 7 days.
- 4.4.8 At an oral examination, the examiners will establish that the work is the candidate's own, and that the candidate understand the work they have done.
- 4.4.9 Notes or video recordings of the oral examination will be taken and may be submitted in part evidence of an allegation of an assessment offence, under the [Assessment Offences Procedure](#).
- 4.4.10 Once an oral examination has been completed, a determination should be made as to whether a referral will be made to the Assessment Offence Procedures. This should be made by the academic with responsibility for the academic direction of the programme. Candidates should be informed of the outcome of the oral examination, in writing, as soon as possible after the examination date.

Comments recorded by an examiner about the performance of a candidate in an oral examination or Viva may be personal data and so available to a student making a subject

access request (see paragraph 4.5.11).

In the event of an appeal or complaint any recordings made of an oral examination or Viva may be made available to a member of university staff as delegated by the Student Casework and Resolution Team. Additionally, for SAS Programmes, escalations during the viva process would also require the Chair of the proceedings, the Vice Dean of Teaching and the Dean to access recordings.

The retention of oral examination or Viva recordings will be held in-line with the university's standard policy on assessment retention.

4.5 Marking

- 4.5.1 The guidance below is to be followed by all Boards of Examiners.
- 4.5.2 Every script and every essay/report/dissertation, which is an assessment element in its own right, shall be marked by at least two Examiners or by one Assessor and one Examiner, who shall afterwards prepare an agreed list of marks.

Track C / Standard Academic Model only: All items of assessment are marked, sampled and moderated in line with the Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles

The marking of scripts and essays/reports/dissertations should be subject to internal moderation and sampled by an External or Intercollegiate Examiner in accordance with **Section 2: External and Intercollegiate Examiners appointed to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners and External/Intercollegiate Examiner Annual Report Form.**

- 4.5.3 Programmes conforming to FHEQ Levels outside of the standard model for an undergraduate or postgraduate programme such a Foundation Programme normally taught at FHEQ Level 3 should be subject to the Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles with any specific marking process variations specified within programme regulations.
- 4.5.4 Where marking is undertaken in pairs, the Chair of the Board of Examiners should assign Examiners into pairs and should ensure that their performance is monitored by the Board. Assessors and Assistant Examiners must always be paired with Examiners. Experienced Examiners should be paired with less experienced Examiners wherever possible.
- 4.5.5 The University and all Examiners are required to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation which came into effect 25 May 2018.
- 4.5.6 General Regulations⁸ contain definitions of assessment offences.
- 4.5.7 Examiners are required to be vigilant in relation to academic misconduct. Any cases of suspected plagiarism found within coursework, or irregularities noted within examination scripts (for instance, suspected collusion or reference to unauthorised materials), should be referred to the appropriate federation member or Programme contacts for onward referral to the Senior Assessment Manager: Examinations, Student Registry Services, University of London Worldwide or the Chief Executive Officer (SAS) in the first instance.
- 4.5.8 Software (e.g. Turnitin) is available to assist the identification of plagiarism in

⁸ Refer to sections 7 (Rules for taking written examinations), 8 (Plagiarism rules) and 9 (Assessment Offences) of the General Regulations <https://london.ac.uk/current-students/programme-documents/regulations>

assignments, projects, reports or dissertations. Candidate work may be submitted in bulk and the resulting reports fed into the marking or moderation process as agreed. Further information on the administration of the process for a particular programme and access to the similarity reports can be obtained from Programme Directors. The University does not utilise authorship software packages, as the outputs from these have not demonstrated reliability or validity. Such software should not be used for this purpose.

- 4.5.9 Examiners are responsible for agreeing the final mark of each element of assessment and ensuring the correct recording of marks on all scripts/essays/coursework, dissertations/reports and upon mark sheets presented to the University. All scripts, coursework etc. marks should be signed by the Examiners. Examiners should follow any detailed instructions from the University of London which are attached to scripts or sent under a separate cover.
- 4.5.10 Where there is a divergence of opinion between Examiners and in the mark awarded by each, Examiners are required to display how these differences have been resolved.
- 4.5.11 The Chief Examiner or Chair is responsible for resolving any significant disparities between the marks of different markers, which cannot be resolved during the marking process.
- 4.5.12 Examiners are reminded that candidates may ask for a copy of any comments regarding their performance which are held on the script or coursework or in another form, such as a marking sheet. The full script is exempt from disclosure but comments, including any marks or annotations which call attention to an individual student, can be disclosed to students who make a subject access request under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)⁹.
- 4.5.13 Where agreed by the University of London Inclusive Practice Assessment Panel, Examiners will be informed of the specific access requirements¹⁰ of a candidate which will need to be taken into account by the Examiners in the assessment of the element concerned.

Examiners are required to ensure the confidentiality of candidates by reference to the candidate number only in all documentation unless programme regulations of the award and assessment criteria indicate otherwise in instances where anonymous marking cannot be guaranteed.

- 4.5.14 Where there is a large number of candidates to be assessed for a particular course/module, Examiners must ensure that appropriate methodologies are employed to secure consistent standards of marking by all pairs of Examiners.

4.6 Illegible Examination Scripts

- 4.6.1 If an examination script, or part thereof, is considered to be illegible or

⁹ Candidates who ask for information about access to their marks and comments should be referred to the Data Protection Policy page on the University of London website: <https://london.ac.uk/about-us/how-university-run/policies/data-protection>

¹⁰ Examples include, but are not limited to, dyslexia, potential problems with syntax or clear expression of language. English as a secondary language is not considered a specific access requirement in this regard.

incomprehensible by the markers, the following procedure will apply.

- 4.6.2 If the first pair of markers is unable to understand the relevant passages, it will be referred through the Chair of the Board of Examiners to a second set of markers.
- 4.6.3 If a second pair of markers is not available, the Chair of the Board of Examiners will refer the script to an External or Intercollegiate Examiner.
- 4.6.4 If the second pair of markers (or External/Intercollegiate Examiner) is also unable to read the passages, a mark of zero will be awarded for those parts.
- 4.6.5 The decision to award a zero mark for all or a substantial part of a script should be taken in consultation with the Chair and the External/Intercollegiate Examiner(s).
- 4.6.6 If a mark of zero is awarded on the above basis the candidate will be notified of the reason for the zero mark on release of the results.
- 4.6.7 No scripts will be transcribed.
- 4.6.8 The examination admission notice and the cover of the examination answer book remind candidates of the importance of writing legibly.

4.7 Missing / Lost Examination Scripts

- 4.7.1 If an examination script should be suspected of being missing/lost, the Senior Assessment Manager: Examinations, of the University of London Worldwide should be contacted as a matter of priority.
- 4.7.2 The Senior Assessment Manager shall be responsible for investigating the whereabouts of a missing/lost examination script and for subsequent liaison with the relevant parties, including the candidate(s), the Examiner(s), and officers at examination centres and in University of London Worldwide and the federation members. Member institution staff and Examiners should not discuss the missing/lost script/s with candidates; all correspondence in this regard should be channelled through the Senior Assessment Manager University of London Worldwide.
- 4.7.3 The Senior Assessment Manager shall be responsible for informing the candidate(s) whose script(s) are deemed missing/lost of the options available to them, detailed in paragraphs 4.7.4 - 4.7.8. These options are designed to neither advantage nor disadvantage any candidates as a result of the loss of the script(s).
- 4.7.4 Candidates may be awarded the mark attained in the corresponding coursework element (where applicable) to the lost script element as the overall mark or grade for that module. The mark for formative or summative coursework may be awarded, as deemed appropriate.
- 4.7.5 Candidates may be offered the opportunity to complete an alternative form of assessment to be completed within a set timeframe. The Senior Assessment Manager shall make arrangements with the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners for an examination to be set, where candidates choose this option.
- 4.7.6 Where it is possible to compile an appropriate averaged mark from the results of other modules completed at the same level as the lost script.
- 4.7.7 Candidates may re-sit the module for which the script has been lost under normal examination conditions at the next examination session. If this option is taken, the University shall waive the examination entry fee for the relevant

paper(s).

4.7.8 Candidates may be offered the opportunity to progress without re-sitting the relevant assessment element for which the script has been lost. In this instance, the candidate will be deemed to have satisfied the rules of progression on which passing the assessment element is dependent. The formula used for classification will be adjusted accordingly, by the Board of Examiners, as if the candidate had been exempted from the examination in the course/module for which the mark is not available.

Related provisions

4.7.9 If an examination script goes missing after it has been assessed *and* the mark assigned to the script has been recorded on the mark sheet, the mark will stand, subject to confirmation by the Chair of the Board of Examiners.

4.7.10 Where the Chair of the Board of Examiners confirms the mark (in the circumstance identified in paragraph 4.7.9), the confirmation shall be explicitly minuted by the Secretary of the Board.

4.7.11 Where the Chair of the Board of Examiners decides not to confirm the mark (in the circumstances identified in paragraph 4.7.9), the Senior Assessment Manager shall contact the candidate under the provisions made in paragraph 4.7.3, offering the range of options detailed in paragraphs 4.7.4 – 4.7.8.

4.7.12 If an examination script deemed to be missing/lost is located *before* the candidate has chosen or undertaken one of the alternative assessment options identified in paragraphs 4.7.4 – 4.7.8, it shall be treated as a 'late' script. The Senior Assessment Manager shall liaise with the Chair of the Board of Examiners to arrange for the assessment of the script as a matter of priority.

4.7.13 If an examination script deemed to be missing/lost is located *after* the candidate has chosen or undertaken one of the alternative assessment options identified in paragraphs 4.7.4 – 4.7.8, the script will be assessed. If the mark awarded to the located script is higher than the mark awarded to the alternative assessment element, the former mark will supersede the latter mark. If the mark assigned to the located script is lower than the mark awarded for the alternative assessment, the alternative assessment mark will stand.

4.7.14 A resit due to a lost script **for a first attempt** will be treated as a first attempt in respect of the capping of marks. If resit marks are capped within a particular programme, the resit for the lost script will therefore not be capped and the mark will carry the full weight.

4.8 Corrupt or blank files

4.8.1 If a file (or files) submitted by a candidate as part of an assessment, including Online Timed Assessment, cannot be opened by the Examiner or the University, or if the file is blank, the submission will be treated as a valid attempt and the candidate will receive a mark of zero for the work concerned.

4.8.2 Work submitted will be marked as it has been received. Candidates are not permitted to submit a final draft of their work after the submission deadline.

4.9 Meetings of the Boards of Examiners

All summative academically assessed student work, marks achieved, progressions and awards considered by a Board of Examiners must be conducted on an anonymous basis by reference to candidate numbers only.

- 4.9.1 The Chair of the Board of Examiners has the authority to request that specific members of the Board attend the final meeting, so that representatives are present for all subject areas being assessed.
- 4.9.2 Proceedings shall not be invalidated by the absence of an Examiner or Examiners through illness or other unavoidable cause. In such cases the Examiner(s) should endeavour to be available for consultation.
- 4.9.3 Any established guidelines for a quorum of Boards of Examiners must be recorded in the Board's Terms of Reference and adhered to. If these are not established the following should apply:
 - For Model A Boards, the final result of an examination shall be determined at a meeting at which the Examiners eligible to vote are required to be present in addition to the Chair or Deputy Chair and at least one External/Intercollegiate examiner.
 - For Model B and C Boards, the final result of an examination shall be determined at a meeting at which the Chair or Deputy Chair, at least one External/Intercollegiate Examiner and Chief Examiners or Course/Module Leaders or their deputies are required to be present.
 - For Model D Boards progression and awards shall be determined at a meeting at which the Chair or Deputy Chair, at least one External/Intercollegiate Examiner and Examiners from one or more parent boards are required to be present.
- 4.9.4 Proceedings of any Board meeting held to determine the outcome of examinations will not be valid unless the Chair or Deputy Chair and at least one External or Intercollegiate Examiner is in attendance
- 4.9.5 The agenda for the Board of Examiners meeting should include the following items:
 - membership of the Board of Examiners;
 - confidentiality notice;
 - statement on conflicts of interest;
 - statement on institutional commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
 - confirmation of the minutes of the previous year's meeting and matters arising;
 - report on chair's actions taken since the previous Board;
 - review of the assessment criteria and scheme of award;
 - mitigating circumstances;
 - consideration of progression and awards;
 - decisions on University or other prize allocation for achievement;
 - summary by External/Intercollegiate examiners;
 - chairs comments;
 - signing of documentation;

- procedure for the release of results.

A template agenda is available from the secretary of the Board.

4.9.6 The Board of Examiners should be serviced in accordance with **Section 5: Procedures for the Management of University of London Worldwide Board of Examiners**. A record must be kept by the University of London Worldwide and the federation member, and the School of Advanced Study as appropriate.

4.9.7 No persons other than the members and designated administrative staff shall be permitted to attend meetings of any Board of Examiners without specific invitation from the Chair. Assistant Examiners and Assessors may be invited to attend for discussion as required.

4.9.8 The proceedings and minutes of the Board are confidential.

4.10 Determination of Results

4.10.1 Boards of Examiners shall not amend candidates' agreed marks unless within the Board Terms of Reference.

4.10.2 Decisions concerning the classification of candidates shall be arrived at by majority vote of eligible members present at the meeting. The views of the External and Intercollegiate Examiner(s) must be particularly influential in the case of disagreement.

4.10.3 The Board of Examiners may use its discretion if it considers it right to do so in the proper discharge of its duties and with the endorsement of the External/Intercollegiate examiner(s). In all circumstances where discretion is applied, clear reasons must be identified for doing so and a record kept. Similarly, a record should be kept why discretion has not been exercised in any case involving lengthy discussion and consideration.

4.10.4 The Chair shall have a casting vote in addition to his/her own vote. Administrative officers do not have a vote and should not act as Chair to the Board.

4.10.5 The Board of Examiners, the University of London Worldwide and the federation member, and the School of Advanced Study shall not place on any published list of successful candidates the name or number of any candidate who:

- has not taken all the elements prescribed under the Regulations for examination for which he/she has entered;
- is in debt to the University over programme fees;
- is under investigation for suspected assessment offences or for a disciplinary offence.

Nor shall any written or verbal indication be made to anyone outside the Board regarding the outcome of such candidates' assessment.

4.10.6 The Chair and External/Intercollegiate Examiner(s) shall certify that the examination was conducted in accordance with the programme regulations. They shall confirm that students have been examined to a comparable standard with comparable examinations for federation member-based students and have sat comparable examinations, where applicable. Finally, they shall certify that there is parity of standards at a national level. A form will be provided to the Chair and External/Intercollegiate Examiners for this purpose and the form should be signed and returned to the University together with the

final report (see 4.9.7) of the Board of Examiners. Refer to **Section 2: External and Intercollegiate Examiners appointed to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners and External/Intercollegiate Examiner Annual Report Form, para 8.6**, for onward action in instances where such confirmation cannot be given.

4.10.7 A final report confirms the agreed results of all candidates for the year/session, and includes any marks and results agreed and confirmed by Chair's action since the previous meeting of the Board. This, including any later addendums, must be signed by the Chair and the External/Intercollegiate Examiners and lodged immediately with the Student Assessment Office, University of London Worldwide. The Final Report Form will be filed alongside the Minutes of the Board meeting.

4.10.8 Candidates' results will be published via the reporting lines described in **Section 1: Reporting lines and Terms of Reference for University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners**.

4.11 Communication protocols

4.11.1 This Handbook establishes rules relating to communicating with and about students, with specific reference to:

- disclosing the contents of an examination paper (see paragraphs 4.2.1 and 4.2.4);
- engaging in communication with a student about their performance (see paragraph 4.13.3);
- protecting a student's personal data (see paragraph 4.5.4);
- protecting a student's confidentiality during the marking process (see paragraph 4.5.13);
- complying with formal procedures for the dissemination of results and assessment outcomes (see paragraph 4.10.5).

4.11.2 When communicating with students, Examiners must maintain the security and confidentiality of both their work and that of the University at all times. Disclosures which breach the rules can arise inadvertently and Examiners should be particularly aware of the occasions they are operating in a public sphere, such as when using discussion forums and other popular social media platforms.

4.12 Mitigating Circumstances

4.12.1 The guidance below shall be followed by all Boards of Examiners. The Board of Examiners may refer to the more specific guidelines in the Board Terms of Reference to which the agreed procedures should be attached. If more specific guidelines on the consideration of mitigating circumstances exist within a federation member, those guidelines must also be followed.

4.12.2 Each Board of Examiners shall agree in advance the procedures it will follow for considering mitigating circumstances experienced by candidates for examinations in the session concerned or previous sessions. These shall include but are not limited to:

- medical conditions;
- personal and domestic circumstances;

- accidents and incidents;
- disturbances during examinations;
- serious procedural errors in relation to the delivery of the examination services.

These procedures should be attached to the Board's Terms of Reference.

4.12.3 Mitigating circumstances should only be taken into account if the candidate has provided relevant documentary evidence, such as a medical certificate, within three weeks of the last examination in the session concerned. Evidence submitted within the three-week timeframe for a previous session can also be taken into account. Boards, or their sub-groups, should consider each case on an individual basis. Circumstances where action may not be taken include but are not limited to:

- ongoing medical conditions for which special arrangements are in place for the candidate (unless they suddenly become worse);
- work related assignments or postings;
- circumstances for which no official documentation is provided;
- mitigating circumstances that are not brought to the attention of the University within three weeks of the last examination in the session concerned;
- circumstances where it is deemed that a candidate's overall position would not be improved as a result of a better performance.

Where a candidate has been permitted special examination arrangements due to a disability, in certain instances a note may be attached to the completed examination script with regard to the special arrangements granted.

4.12.4 Boards of Examiners may wish to establish sub-committees to consider the detail of each case and recommend the action to be taken. However, any recommendation affecting a candidate's progression or classification must be agreed and endorsed by the full Board of Examiners.

4.12.5 Boards of Examiners should not add marks as a result of any submission of evidence related to mitigating circumstances nor should they attempt to estimate the mark a candidate may have obtained had the mitigating circumstances not arisen.

4.12.6 Where a candidate's classification has been amended in view of mitigating circumstances, details of the Board's discussions shall be recorded in the minutes by the Secretary of the Board.

4.12.7 For reasons of anonymity, medical and other evidence should not generally be made available to all members of the Board without the prior removal of personally identifying information.

4.12.8 Significant medical and other mitigating circumstances will normally only be taken into account in cases of borderline marks, results, or classifications or, in the case of a failure, marks which may be condoned or not recorded as an attempt.

4.13 Awards made in exceptional circumstances

4.13.1 In exceptional cases, and where a student is unable to return to enter for assessment, the Board of Examiners may, if they determine there is sufficient

evidence that an award is merited, consider the award of:

- a) a classified degree;
- b) an exit award (in line with Programme Regulations) or
- c) an aegrotat degree (an undergraduate degree without classification).

- 4.13.2 The awarding of classified and unclassified (aegrotat) degrees is described in the General Regulations¹¹.
- 4.13.3 Before awarding a classified or unclassified degree a Board of Examiners must consider whether the matter can be dealt with under the rules for considering mitigating circumstances.

4.14 Representations from Candidates

- 4.14.1 Representations made by a candidate are managed in accordance with Regulation 1, Annex 3, of the University of London Regulations, which are published in these guidelines at **Section 6: Representations concerning decisions of Boards of Examiners**.
- 4.14.2 Candidates are advised in the General Regulations¹² that appeals on academic grounds will not be considered but that an administrative re-check of their time-constrained examination results can be conducted on request. The re-check process includes confirming that the script was marked by the appropriate number of examiners, or subject to moderation where applicable, that marks were captured accurately and that the final mark agreed by the Board of Examiners was correctly recorded and shown on the candidate's Notification of Results. Where errors are found, these will be referred to the Chair in the first instance.
- 4.14.3 To ensure equity Chairs and Examiners should not communicate with candidates about their performance in the examinations.
- 4.14.4 No decision of a properly convened and constituted Board of Examiners, acting in accordance with these and any other relevant Instructions for the conduct of examinations and the Regulations for the particular examination, may be modified except as provided for in **Section 6: Representations concerning decisions of Boards of Examiners**.

4.15 Suspension of Regulations

- 4.15.1 The Board of Examiners may seek to assist a candidate's progression through, or completion of, a programme where the general or programme specific regulations do not permit such progression or completion. In exceptional circumstances (i.e. a candidate's serious medical or other mitigating circumstances) the Board may request a suspension of regulations. See also the paragraphs relating to Awards made in exceptional circumstances at 4.13.
- 4.15.2 General Regulations and Programme Regulations for programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide, and regulations within the Quality Assurance Framework of the School of Advanced Study may not be suspended if a candidate is in breach of University of London Ordinances or Regulations.

¹¹ Refer to *Awards made in exceptional circumstances*, section 13 of the General Regulations <https://london.ac.uk/current-students/programme-documents/regulations>

¹² Refer to *Administrative re-check of marks*, section 11 of the General Regulations <https://london.ac.uk/current-students/programme-documents/regulations>

4.15.3 An application to suspend regulations must be made to the University of London in accordance with the agreed policy and procedure for suspension of regulations. All applications will be kept on file and a summary with the decision reported to the University of London Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC).

4.16 Assessment Offences

4.16.1 Any case of suspected assessment offence, including plagiarism, collusion and all categories of examination hall misconduct, will be considered under the *Procedures for the Consideration of Allegations of Assessment Offence, University of London*¹³. Please refer to paragraphs 4.5.5 – 4.5.7.

4.16.2 Further information can be obtained from the Programme Director or the Senior Assessment Manager: Examinations.

4.17 Examiners' Commentaries

4.17.1 Examiners' commentaries are a key feedback mechanism for students and are valued by both current and future students. The aim of the examiners' commentaries is to help students understand how the syllabus for each course/module is examined, the kinds of questions they will be asked and the quality of answers that the examiners expect. They may also indicate some of the common mistakes students have made in the past, so that these can be avoided in the future, and include advice on any significant changes to examination format for the next year. The University of London Worldwide provides resources, such as Assessment Toolkits that provide guidance on assessment, feedback and marking and may assist in addressing standardisation of Examiners' commentaries across all programmes.

4.17.2 Detailed guidance for producing commentaries will be forwarded to examiners, where applicable. However, examiners may contact the University of London Worldwide Publications team for further information.

4.17.3 Completion of a commentary may be a requirement of an examiner's appointment. Full payment for work as an examiner, in these circumstances, is contingent on submission of the examiner's commentary/commentaries for which the examiner is responsible. Deadlines for submission may also apply.

4.18 Alerting the University to concerning content within an examination paper

4.18.1 Examiners marking a script that displays any concerning content such as a student writing a personal testimony indicating distress, must raise this with the University as soon as possible.

4.18.2 The following sets out the protocol for bringing an examination paper to the attention of the University:

Upon identification of any concerning content, a copy of the front page of the examination script, along with a copy of the pages containing the concerning content should be emailed to the Associate Director (Student Life) and the Wellbeing Manager, using the following email address:

¹³ <https://my.london.ac.uk/assessment-offence-procedures>

wellbeing@london.ac.uk

If the concerning content is identified in an online examination, all details from the front page of the script and the concerning content should be included.

The email should include a short summary of why the script is being brought to the attention of the Associate Director (Student Life) and the Wellbeing Manager and indicate the relevant page numbers to which the concern relates.

Part 2

Section 1: Reporting lines and Terms of Reference for University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study Boards of Examiners

1. University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study Boards of Examiners are University of London Boards. They may also report within federation member structures which should be identical to or comparable with those established for the assessment of federation member-based students.
2. Boards of Examiners must ensure the application of the scheme of award and assessment criteria approved in accordance with the Quality Assurance Schedule. For further information on the scheme of award please refer to **Section 3: Schemes of Award and Assessment Criteria for programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study**.
3. Marks and classifications or recommendations for the award of Honours should be ratified or approved through federation member/University mechanisms as appropriate. Wherever possible, and applicable, reporting mechanisms parallel with those in place for Boards of Examiners assessing federation member-based Students should be used.
4. Examination results are confidential and may be released only via the agreed University procedure.
5. Terms of Reference should be drawn up for each University of London Board of Examiners and agreed by the relevant committee in accordance with the Quality Assurance Schedule. Detail relating to the Terms of Reference may vary between federation members depending on federation member policy and individual committee and academic management structures. Each year, the terms of reference should be lodged with the Senior Assessment Manager: Examinations, Student Assessment Office, University of London Worldwide, or the SAS Registry no later than 1st May and should be a standing item on the agenda for the Board of Examiners meeting.
6. Terms of Reference will set out:
 - (i) the reporting lines established for the Board of Examiners;
 - (ii) the decision making and advisory powers of the Board, to include agreed procedures for the consideration of mitigating circumstances submitted by candidates and an account of the circumstances, if any, under which the Board may amend candidates' marks after the marks have been agreed by the marking team.
7. Chairs of Boards of Examiners are required to complete the Terms of Reference for their Boards and ensure they are approved through the appropriate governance mechanisms in accordance with the Quality Assurance Schedule.

Section 2: External and Intercollegiate Examiners appointed to University of London Boards of Examiners and External/Intercollegiate Examiner Annual Report Form

1. The Role of External and Intercollegiate Examiners

- 1.1. External Examiners are appointed from outside the University of London. All programmes must appoint at least one External Examiner to their Board. An External Examiner's role is to provide impartial and independent advice as part of the decision-making process of the Board of Examiners and offer informative comment and recommendations upon whether or not:
 - threshold academic standards set for the award are being maintained in accordance with the framework for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements;
 - the academic standards and achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK Higher Education institutions of which the External Examiner has experience;
 - the processes for the assessment of students are sound and have been rigorously and fairly applied, in line with University of London policies and the programme regulations;
 - good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment is in evidence;
 - there are opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.
- 1.2. Intercollegiate Examiners are members of the academic staff of a University of London federation member other than the federation member(s) providing academic direction for the programme. An Intercollegiate Examiner's role is identical to that of an External Examiner, except that they have the additional duty of ensuring that the standards of the award are comparable with those of other federation members of the University of London. Intercollegiate Examiners on their own do not fulfil the requirement for an External Examiner to be appointed.
- 1.3. External and Intercollegiate Examiners should be persons with:
 - relevant qualifications to at least the level being examined and/or extensive practitioner experience in the fields covered by the programme of study;
 - familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award being assessed;
 - expertise in designing and operating the range of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject;
 - sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the subject discipline to command the respect of academic and professional peers;
 - fluency in English, and where the programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language;
 - knowledge of UK sector agreed reference points and standards to be expected of students to achieve the award being assessed;
 - knowledge of how a subject discipline is delivered across comparable UK Higher Education institutions;

- awareness of current developments in design and delivery of the relevant curricula and in enhancement of the student learning experience.

In addition, any applicable criteria from a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body, will be required to be met.

2. Nomination and Appointment of External and Intercollegiate Examiners

- 2.1 At least one External Examiner shall be appointed to every University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study Board of Examiners.
- 2.2 External and Intercollegiate Examiners shall be nominated according to mechanisms set out in the Quality Assurance Schedule for the respective programme. In order to align with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, the University of London reviews the nomination against the national appointment criteria. The administrative process of appointment shall be carried out by the Academic Contractors Manager, University of London.
- 2.3 In order to preserve the independence and objectivity essential to the role of External and Intercollegiate Examiners, federation members should ensure that any potential conflicts of interest are identified and resolved prior to appointment. Potential conflicts of interest for an External and Intercollegiate Examiner might include:
 - any prior or concurrent role in the (re)development, (re)validation of a programme, or parts thereof, for which they are acting as Examiner;
 - any prior or concurrent role in the periodic review of a programme, or parts thereof (i.e. acting as an external subject specialist), for which they are acting as Examiner;
 - any membership of a governing body or committee of the University of London or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the University or federation member;
 - any close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study;
 - any requirement to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study;
 - any circumstance where the examiner knows they will be in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study;
 - any 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 courses/modules in question;
 - any former employment or registration as a student with the programmes offered through University of London Worldwide or federation member or the School of Advanced Study unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s);
- 2.4 federation members must not nominate more than one External or Intercollegiate Examiner from the same department of the same institution and should ensure that they do not hold more than two concurrent External Examiner roles on taught programmes.
- 2.5 Member institutions must not nominate External or Intercollegiate Examiners to Boards of Examiners where the examiner holds a simultaneous External/Intercollegiate appointment at another federation member of the University of London.
- 2.6 The appointment of External and Intercollegiate Examiners must not be part of any

reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution, or part of any arrangement whereby a former External Examiner is succeeded by a colleague from their home department or institution.

- 2.7 While recognising the value of experience as an important factor in the effective discharging of the duties of External Examiners, federation members should ensure that candidates who are able to meet the criteria defined in paragraph 1.3 are not excluded on the grounds that they have no previous experience as External Examiners.
- 2.8 External and Intercollegiate Examiners will be appointed annually. An External or Intercollegiate Examiner may serve for a maximum period of four consecutive years. In exceptional circumstances, this period may be extended by one year. He or she shall not be eligible for re-appointment until after a lapse of five or more years after their final contracted year of service has concluded, and then only in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.9 Nominated External and Intercollegiate Examiners will be asked to formally accept their offer of appointment. In doing so, they will agree to fulfil the role and carry out the responsibilities set out in this Handbook.
- 2.10 The contract for services may be terminated either by the External/Intercollegiate Examiner or by the University.

3. Fees and expenses

- 3.1 External and Intercollegiate Examiners will be paid according to fee and expenses schedules agreed annually. Fees will be paid upon receipt of the External/Intercollegiate Examiner's Annual Report. All payments will be made by University of London Worldwide or federation member or the School of Advanced Study in accordance with the University's Financial Regulations.

4. Information provided to External and Intercollegiate Examiners

- 4.1 Nominated External and Intercollegiate Examiners must be provided with appropriate information so that they are able to decide whether they will be able to carry out their responsibilities effectively and to ensure that, once appointed, they can fulfil those responsibilities. External and Intercollegiate Examiners should receive in either hardcopy or softcopy or via the appropriate web site/web pages and Virtual Learning Environment, access to:
 - Details of the term of appointment and arrangements for its termination;
 - Fees and expenses rates and procedures for remuneration;
 - University of London Handbook for Examinations;
 - The relevant Programme and General regulations, including the full syllabus;
 - Programme specifications;
 - The relevant Scheme of award and assessment criteria and/or scheme for the award of honours;
 - Past examination question papers;
 - The programme prospectus or similar;
 - A list of the learning materials available to students;
 - Board of Examiners list.

4.2 External and Intercollegiate Examiners may ask the Chair of the Board of Examiners for any other information or documents (such as materials permitted in examinations) which they consider necessary to discharge their responsibilities and this information or material will, if possible, be provided to the External/Intercollegiate Examiner.

5. Duties, Powers and Responsibilities of External and Intercollegiate Examiners

5.1. The Chair of the Board of Examiners shall determine the distribution of duties between External/Intercollegiate Examiners. The duties, powers and responsibilities of External and Intercollegiate Examiners are set out below.

6. Paper-setting and Approval of Examination Question Papers

6.1. External and Intercollegiate Examiners shall be invited to participate in the process of setting of examination papers. Each individual examination paper must be approved by at least one External/Intercollegiate Examiner who has not been involved in authoring the paper. Where requested by the Chair of the Board, External and Intercollegiate Examiners may be involved with the overall scrutiny process of question papers for a programme of study to guard against overlap in corresponding subject areas.

7. Marking, sampling and moderation

7.1. External and Intercollegiate Examiners have the right to inspect any script or other assessed examination material.

7.2. External and Intercollegiate Examiners are requested to sample scripts or other assessed examination material and to take part in oral and practical examinations where these are specified.

7.3. External and Intercollegiate Examiners should see enough assessed examination material to be able to assess whether marking and classifications are of an appropriate standard and are consistent. This should normally include:

- 7.3.1. A sample of scripts from the top, the middle and the bottom of the range.
- 7.3.2. A sample of scripts with borderline marks.
- 7.3.3. A sample of scripts assessed by Examiners as first class and as failures.

7.4. External and Intercollegiate Examiners should not be involved with double marking of scripts.

7.5. In exceptional circumstances, External and Intercollegiate Examiners may be asked to moderate where first and second markers have failed to agree a mark.

8. Meetings of the Board of Examiners and endorsement of decisions made

8.1. External and Intercollegiate Examiners are required to attend meetings of Boards of Examiners at which significant decisions are to be taken. This may include pre- or Sub-board meetings. The Chair of the Board of Examiners must ensure that External and Intercollegiate Examiners are invited to attend such meetings. Decisions taken without the presence of an External Examiner shall be considered invalid.

8.2. In cases of disagreement on the final classification of a particular candidate, the views of the External/Intercollegiate Examiner(s) must be particularly influential. The decision shall be arrived at by majority vote of those members of the Board of Examiners present.

- 8.3. External and Intercollegiate Examiners should be invited to endorse formally the decisions of the Board of Examiners before candidates' examination results are released.
- 8.4. External and Intercollegiate Examiners have the right to withhold their endorsement of the Board's decisions if, in their belief, the assessment process has not been conducted properly.
- 8.5. If an External or Intercollegiate Examiner is not able to endorse the Board's decisions, the Chair of the Board of Examiners and the External/Intercollegiate Examiner shall make written statements to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) and to the senior academic officer of the federation member, who will assess and, if possible, resolve the issue.

Track C / Standard Academic Model only: Any written statements to be made to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International, Learning & Teaching) or the Director Student Registry Services, University of London Worldwide.

- 8.6. If an External or Intercollegiate Examiner has not been able to endorse the Board's decisions, the matter, whether resolved or not, shall be referred to the University of London Academic Quality Assurance Committee for consideration. The matter shall also be reported to the University of London Academic Board. If the matter relates to the academic direction of a specific programme, it should also be given consideration through appropriate federation member mechanisms.

9. Annual Reports

- 9.1. External and Intercollegiate Examiners should submit an online report after each exam board to the University of London, on the proforma provided, within one month of the date of the final meeting of the Board of Examiners, but in any event no later than three months after this date.
- 9.2. In instances where programmes have multiple awarding Board of Examiners meetings in an academic year, discretion exists from the relevant Chair of the Board of Examiners as to the expectation and frequency of External and Intercollegiate Examiner reports submitted online. Timelines for submission of reports will be as detailed in 9.1.
- 9.3. External and Intercollegiate Examiners' reports will be shared with various parties within the University of London and federation member in accordance with the Quality Assurance Schedule, for consideration and follow-up under the mechanisms outlined below and in accordance with the Quality Assurance Schedule. If an External or Intercollegiate Examiner so wishes, they may send a separate confidential report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education).

10. Procedure for the receipt, consideration and follow-up of External/Intercollegiate Examiners' reports on online and distance learning programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide and on-campus postgraduate taught programmes through the School of Advanced Study

10.1. The University of London online and distance learning programmes

- 10.1.1. The University of London Worldwide collaborates through a partnership with federation members of the University and the University of London Worldwide to deliver flexible and distance learning programmes. Within this partnership, the University of London is the awarding body. Federation members are

responsible for the academic direction of individual programmes, while the University of London Worldwide provides the business management, administrative infrastructure, and development resource.

Track C / Standard Academic Model only: The Programme Director within the federation member, in consultation with the University of London Worldwide Director of Online Education, is responsible for the Academic Direction of Track C / Standard Academic Model programmes.

10.1.2. Federation members/Track C / Standard Academic Model Programme Directors and the University of London Worldwide will consider, as appropriate, issues raised by External and Intercollegiate Examiners. It will also be necessary to produce co-ordinated feedback for External and Intercollegiate Examiners and for report to the University.

11. Short Course/Stand Alone Module Examiners

11.1.1. Short Course/Stand Alone Module Examiners are appropriately qualified and experienced external academic advisors appointed to provide oversight of University provision leading to an award of credit that is not necessarily equivalent to a regular or traditional award-bearing programme of study. Duties are similar in nature to the role of an External Examiner though with a scope that may be restricted to a single module or cluster of modules that may comprise a credit-bearing Short Course.

11.1.2. Short Course/Stand Alone Module Examiners will conduct paper-setting, approval of examination questions as well as marking, sampling and moderation of marks in-line with the standard duties of an External Examiner but that these duties will be scaled in proportion to the level, volume and complexity of assessments provided as advised by a relevant Programme or Module Leader.

11.1.3. Short Course/Stand Alone Module Examiners will attend any relevant Board of Examiners or Assessment Board meetings as they occur which may be in greater frequency than programme-level meetings reflecting the nature of this form of study. Attendance will be as advised by the relevant Programme or Module Leader and a written set of reflective remarks from the Examiner may be acceptable in lieu of physical attendance in circumstances where attendance at multiple Board meetings within short timeframes may prove logistically challenging to fully realise.

11.1.4. During Board of Examiner meetings for Short Course of Stand Alone Modules, the Examiner has the same rights and duties as outlined in Section 2, Clause 8 of this document in relation to the endorsement of decisions made at meetings.

11.1.5. Short Course/Stand Alone Module Examiners will be required to submit an Annual Report via the standard University proforma link. Timings of submissions of reports will be based upon an Examiners' contracted service reaching increments of 12 months from their initial appointment or attendance at any Board of Examiners Meeting which is closest to an increment of 12 months from an Examiners initial appointment. Reports should be written in proportion to the scale and scope of contracted Module, cluster of Modules or Short Courses an Examiner has been contracted to. Reports provided will be fed-in to the University's monitoring and feedback mechanisms. If an Examiner so wishes, or has confidential concerns they may wish to raise, they may send a separate confidential report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education).

12. Consideration of External and Intercollegiate Examiner Reports

- 12.1.1. To facilitate proper consideration of specific issues, External and Intercollegiate Examiners are asked to use a standard pro forma to produce their annual reports. The report will be made available to students through the Student Portal, in line with sector practice.
- 12.1.2. The process for consideration of External and Intercollegiate Examiner Reports is detailed in the Quality Assurance Schedule or the Quality Assurance Framework (SAS).

Section 3: Schemes of Award and Assessment Criteria for programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study

1. Each programme delivered through the University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study must have an agreed award scheme and assessment criteria.
2. Schemes of award should have regard to the totality of the programme of study, the requirement for progression within it and the requirement for the student to achieve a satisfactory standard overall. They should include the following:
 - 2.1 Number of units, modules, papers or courses to be attempted and number to be passed;
 - 2.2 Rules of progression and pre-requisites;
 - 2.3 Mark scale used (alphabetical grade, percentage etc.)
 - 2.4 Position on the mark or grade scale of Pass marks, Class boundaries or points at which any awards of Credit, Merit and Distinction are made;
 - 2.5 The weighting or mark allocation of each individual component of the programme;
 - 2.6 Weighting/capping of resit marks and rules relating to any other penalties;
 - 2.7 Rules or conventions for the condonation of failed units and award of credit;
 - 2.8 Means of calculation of classification, including use of aggregates, weighting, average marks etc.
3. Assessment criteria should include a descriptive account of the achievement expected in each Class or mark range.
4. Schemes of award and assessment criteria are a matter of regulation and should be approved formally before the examinations take place by the appropriate committee(s) within the federation member, as specified in the Quality Assurance Schedule¹⁴. Any subsequent changes to schemes and criteria should also be formally agreed and will be published in the respective programme regulations.
5. Schemes of award and assessment criteria should be made available to students and will be published in the relevant Programme Regulations.
6. Schemes of award and assessment may differ for Short Courses and Stand-Alone Modules from traditional models of award and assessment. In cases where variation does exist the differences will be indicated via Module or Programme Descriptions or other programme documents.
7. The Board of Examiners may also wish to establish additional guidelines or conventions, which should also be endorsed by the appropriate body with oversight of the programme. Such guidelines or conventions might include:
 - 7.1 Guidance on marking at high and low ends of the scale (outstanding firsts, borderline fails etc.);
 - 7.2 Position and range of the borderline in which the Board will apply discretion;
 - 7.3 Ways in which the Board may use its discretion, for example:

¹⁴ <https://london.ac.uk/about-us/academic-quality/quality-assurance-schedules> University mechanisms will apply to the LLB, Cert HE and Diploma in Law.

- significant adverse circumstances in respect of an individual student's performance or groups of students and/or academic factors.
- Preponderance of marks in higher class;
- "Exit velocity";
- Distribution of marks across the cohort.

7.4 The extent to which the Board of Examiners, if circumstances make it necessary and appropriate, may depart from its award scheme and assessment criteria;

7.5 Use of additional supplementary or qualifying tests for progression purposes.

Section 4: The Appointment of Associate Examiners to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners

1. Associate Examiners are Examiners external to the University of London who are appointed to fulfil the standard role of Examiner (sometimes called Internal Examiner) on University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners. They are appointed when the specific nature of a programme calls for expertise from a wider pool of Examiners than is available within the University and if their appointment is consistent with federation member policy.
2. Associate Examiners should be appointed on an annual basis under the same federation member or University procedures used for the appointment of Internal or College Examiners to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners.
3. Associate Examiners may be appointed, as necessary and appropriate, to any of the four models for Boards of Examiners in use within the University of London Worldwide. In the case of Model B Boards, Associate Examiners may be appointed to fulfil the duties of Examiners or to fulfil the duties of Chief Examiners. The Associate Examiner will be a full member of the Board of Examiners with responsibilities identical to his or her internal counterpart. Where an Associate Examiner is appointed as a Chief/Lead Examiner, this should be indicated on the appointment documentation.
4. Associate Examiners, although external to the University of London, are not External Examiners and do not have their moderating or evaluative responsibilities.
5. Before appointing a proposed Associate Examiner, the appointing body must satisfy itself that the Associate Examiner has suitable relevant experience and academic standing equivalent to that of an Examiner who is a member of the academic staff of a federation member within the federation of the University of London.
6. Member institutions should indicate the nomination of Associate Examiners in the appointment lists for Boards of Examiners when the lists are sent to the University of London Worldwide, which will conduct the administrative process of appointment and will maintain a record of Associate Examiner appointments.

Section 5: Procedures for the Management of University of London Board of Examiners

This Handbook is intended to support the Boards of Examiners in carrying out their responsibilities and exercise their academic judgement. They are also intended to enable the University of London Worldwide to maintain, on behalf of the University of London, a record of decisions made by University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners.

Status of University of London Worldwide and School of Advanced Study Boards of Examiners

- Boards of Examiners for the University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study are University of London Boards, awarding the University of London degrees and diplomas. Assessment of students is carried out by the academic staff of the University who, as members of University Boards of Examiners, set and mark papers and determine candidates' performance. Under the quality assurance arrangements agreed for the University of London Worldwide, Boards of Examiners are also integrated into federation member academic management structures where necessary. In the case of the University of London Undergraduate Laws Programme, University academic management structures apply. University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners make reports to the University of London Academic Quality Assurance Committee so that the University can fulfil its responsibilities as the awarding body for awards made through the University of London Worldwide.
- Boards of Examiners are important bodies within the University of London and their correct operation is of fundamental importance.
- Wherever possible, and applicable, practices and procedures should reflect those in place for the assessment of federation member-based students. However, as the University of London is the registering and awarding body for programmes delivered through the University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study, it is important that a central record is kept of all decisions made by Boards of Examiners in respect of these students. This record is maintained by University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study. In addition, to ensure a common approach to the assessment of all students on programmes offered through the University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study, a number of centrally agreed guidelines and templates are used.
- Terms of Reference, setting out the powers and constitutions of each Board of Examiners, will be drawn up and approved by the federation member or University of London Worldwide or the School of Advanced Study as appropriate. Further details of the responsibilities and conduct of University of London Boards of Examiners are set out throughout the Handbook for Examinations.

Role and Duties of the Secretary to the Board of Examiners

- Examination Boards must be properly serviced. Each meeting of each Board must have a formal agenda, and a record of the decisions of the Board meeting must be held with the marksheets tabled at the meeting which are confirmed via the Final Report Form signed by the Chair and Externals Examiners. A note of individual circumstances which required special attention and consideration must be recorded within the approved minutes. This assists the business of the meeting and is necessary to:
 - provide a clear audit trail in the event that there is any question about the decision of a Board on any matter (student appeals);

- provide a clear record in the event that there is any challenge to the decision of the Board (for example, with a student requesting a review of the Board's decision);
- enable the Board to examine precedents on any issue.
- Each Board of Examiners should have a designated Secretary. The Secretary will normally be identified by the Director of Student Registry Services, University of London Worldwide and the Chief Executive Officer, School of Advanced Study. Alternatively, for UoLW, the responsibility for servicing the Board of Examiners might be shared between a University of London Worldwide representative and a federation member representative.
- The Secretary, acting on behalf of the Chair of the Board of Examiners is responsible for:
 - the circulation of information to members about the date, time and place of the meeting at least four weeks in advance of the meeting;
 - the production of an agenda (in consultation with the Chair);
 - tabling of all the necessary paper work for the meeting
 - assisting the Chair during the meeting;
 - writing the minutes;
 - noting and reporting as appropriate any issues identified by the Board as needing attention but outside its remit (for example a request for suspension or proposal for an amendment to regulations);
 - compiling the Final Report Form for signature;
 - filing the record of results and decisions made by the Board with the University of London Worldwide for future and historic reference.

The Agenda

- The agenda should, wherever feasible, be circulated to members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Any papers (except for the mark sheets) that the Board is being asked to consider should be circulated with the agenda, so that members have time to consider them.
- The agenda should be drawn up by the approved secretary, in consultation with the Chair.

Documentation

- Mark sheets should not be circulated with the agenda; they are normally tabled at the meeting and should not be taken away by board members. Mark sheets are normally produced by University of London Worldwide and by the School of Advanced Study; any variation to this practice must be agreed by the Chair of the Board of Examiners and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the reasons for and nature of the variation fully documented in the minutes of the Board.
- The Secretary should also circulate or table any other information that the Board will need to help it in its work – for example the agreed Schemes of Award and assessment criteria, where appropriate and any important precedents.
- The Secretary should also ensure that the following documentation is available for the meeting:

- the terms of reference for the Boards of Examiners
- *this Handbook for Examinations (see 4 above)*
- the regulations for the programme of study concerned. If the regulations have recently changed, it is important to have all the sets of regulations that refer to the candidates under consideration.

Minutes

- The minutes should provide a clear summary of the decisions taken at the meeting, together with the discussion leading up to the decisions (where this is required to support the decision).
The minutes should also record any specific reports from markers and moderators on the marking procedures.
- The decisions of the Board need not be listed in respect of every candidate within the minutes: the Final Report Form will provide the record of this information. However, individual candidates should be recorded in the minutes where:
 - the decision of the Board is not obvious from a candidate's position in the rank order (e.g. the decision to award a lower second to a candidate with 58.5 % is expected and does not require explanation; the decision to award that candidate an upper second should be explained in the minutes);
 - the decision of the Board is not in accordance with past precedents;
 - there is a request for the suspension of regulations;
 - there are mitigating circumstances, whether or not the Board's final decision was affected in any way (if the candidate requests a review of the Board's decision, it is important to have a clear statement of whether mitigating circumstances were reported and, if so, what the Board's decision was).
- The minutes should record instances which deviate from the Handbook.
- The nature of mitigating circumstances should be referred to in the minutes, but there is no need to mention them in detail. Reference to domestic problems, health problems, death of a close relative etc. is adequate. Some Colleges delegate authority for this to a sub-group of the Board. The decisions made by this group must be reported to the Board of Examiners.
- The minutes should also summarise the comments of the External and Intercollegiate Examiners (even though they will also be producing written reports).
- Any additional feedback received from External and Intercollegiate Examiners at the Board, not included in their reports, should be forwarded to the Director Student Registry Services and federation member quality personnel.
- The minutes should carry the words "STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL" at the top of every page.
- The minutes should be approved by the Chair and circulated promptly by the Secretary to the External and Intercollegiate Examiners and to each member of the Board. If the Secretary of the Board of Examiners is not a representative of the University of London Worldwide or the School of Advanced Study, the minutes must also be copied to the University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study, as soon as possible.
- The University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study will retain a central archive of all minutes of University of London Worldwide and School of

Advanced Study, Boards of Examiners.

- In the event that Chair's action becomes necessary the following will apply:
 - The Chair must request authority from the Board to act in all matters which may arise after the conclusion of the Board of Examiners' meeting and the minutes should reflect this authority;
 - All actions taken after the meeting must be formally recorded via an addendum to the minutes, including the confirmation of scripts/coursework assessed after the meeting.
 - Where the action relates to a change to an individual mark, to the progression, overall result or classification, the Chair must consult the External or Intercollegiate Examiner. Written approval from the Chair is required to amend any mark or result previously confirmed at the Board;
 - Action taken by the Chair must be recorded via an addendum to the minutes and reported to the Board at its next meeting.

Reporting the Board's decisions and recommendations

- If the Board identifies or makes recommendations about any issue beyond its remit, such as a request for suspension or proposal for an amendment to regulations, the Secretary must ensure the issue is directed promptly to the appropriate person, body or Committee.
- Following meetings of the Boards of Examiners at which students' results are determined, the Final Report Form will be signed off by the Chair of the Board of Examiners and the External Examiners.
- University of London Boards of Examiners have reporting lines corresponding to the arrangements in place as specified in the Quality Assurance Schedule and Quality Assurance Framework (SAS). In some cases, ratification of the recommendations of the University of London Worldwide Board of Examiners is required within the respective federation member. This will be detailed in the Quality Assurance Schedule. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board of Examiners to ensure that University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiners report as appropriate within the federation member academic management structure and that any ratification process deemed necessary by the federation member is carried out.
- Whether or not ratification within the federation member is necessary, all Pass Lists are prepared by the University of London Worldwide, signed by the Director of Student Registry Services and approved by the Vice-Chancellor via accompanying sign-up sheets. Following approval, Diplomas will then be issued.
- University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study, Board of Examiners will also make reports to the University of London Academic Quality Assurance Committee for onward reporting to the University via its governance.
- The University of London Worldwide and the School of Advanced Study will report the allocation of prizes to the Academic Quality Assurance Committee.

Section 6: Academic Appeals

General

1. An academic appeal is a challenge to, or request for reconsideration of, a decision by an academic body – normally an examination board of the University – that makes decisions on student progress, assessment and awards.
2. This may include a request to change marks, progress decisions, or final award classifications. It must be based on either serious mitigating circumstances that could not be submitted earlier through the usual processes, procedural irregularities, or evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of the examiners.
3. An academic appeal cannot be based on a challenge to academic judgement or disagreement with a mark or outcome.

Procedure

4. Any representation shall be made by a candidate within one month of the decision of the Board of Examiners to which it relates in line with the University of London Academic Appeals Procedure.¹⁵

¹⁵ <https://www.london.ac.uk/current-students/student-policies/complaints-appeals-procedure>

Appendix 1: Code of Practice for Examiners when Teaching Students under Private Arrangements

This Code of Practice applies to Examiners¹⁶ appointed to University of London Worldwide Boards of Examiner, who engage in study and revision courses delivered to students studying at recognised or independent teaching centres. Generally, such courses are organised and managed by the teaching centres themselves and contracts are a private arrangement between the teaching centre and the lecturer. The code also applies if the teaching is provided in the context of a contract between a recognised or independent teaching centre and a federation member.

Since the University of London strives to maintain best practice in all its dealings and requires compliance with relevant Codes of Practice and full and transparent compliance with the law in terms of legal compliance, attention is drawn to the Bribery Act 2010. Examiners should be aware that the Act is extra-territorial in scope. Furthermore, it introduces the possibility that alleged irregularities could be referred by a complainant to UK criminal investigation authorities, and that this could occur without the knowledge of the University¹⁷.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is therefore to ensure that any courses delivered to communities of students occur in an acceptable and ethical way by advising academics of the requirements of the University of London, which seeks to ensure that at all times assessment is conducted with appropriate rigour and fairness.

In addition to providing guidance for examiners, this Code should be seen as setting out minimum requirements for federation members and Boards of Examiners which have responsibility to ensure (or maintain) the academic quality of University of London degrees. It is anticipated that Boards of Examiners may wish to develop this Code further to meet the particular contextual and subject specific requirements of their qualifications.

The University of London acknowledges the benefits of teaching centres providing study and revision courses for students delivered by teams which may include academics working with the federation members of the University of London. Whilst many students attending such courses may view them primarily as a way of improving their examination prospects they should also be persuaded of the contribution to their holistic education and learning. Lecturers are encouraged to use these courses as opportunities to help students to think more widely, reflect on their learning and embrace different approaches to their subject, thereby addressing the broader graduate skills rather than focusing exclusively on examination performance.

The University of London requires that teachers who are engaged as examiners for the University of London Boards of Examiners should not give any sub-set of students an unfair advantage over other students. It is important therefore that a sub-set of students should not receive any knowledge of the content of forthcoming examinations which is not available to all students registered for this course, anywhere in the world. In this respect examiners are asked to bear in mind that perceptions are important. The pressures which examinations place on students could, in a small number of cases, lead to allegations of unfairness.

The following notes are designed to guide academics and should be accepted as minimum requirements. Each Examination Board may have additional rules reflecting the requirements of the subject and the context of the delivery.

¹⁶ 'Examiners' in this context, and as applied to this Appendix specifically, refers to anyone providing aspects of assessment or delivering online tutoring for a course/module.

¹⁷ See also: Bribery Act Policy and Guidance:

<https://london.ac.uk/sites/default/files/governance/Bribery-Act-2010-Policy-and-Guidance.pdf> and the Bribery Act 2010 available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/23/contents>

1. All examiners who participate in a study course must declare this on the Register of Interests. A declaration of the payment for such services is also expected.
2. All examiners (or any other individual with access to the examination papers) who participate in teaching sub-sets of students at recognised or independent teaching centres or through other private arrangements must be authorised to do so by the federation member. This authorisation should be copied to the Head of Academic Quality, University of London.
3. Students must not be informed whether or not a visiting academic is an examiner. Teachers who are examiners for a course may not advertise or allow others to advertise to students that they are examiners.
4. Where teachers contract with teaching centres to provide specific examination preparation material (for example mock examinations) these should also be supplied to the federation member in advance. All such materials, including mock examination papers, should be made available to all students who are registered for the corresponding course(s) of the University of London via the VLE.

If you have any questions about this Code, its interpretation, or how to implement it, please contact: Head of Academic Quality, University of London.

Appendix 2: Register of Interests: Policy and Procedures for considering Conflicts of Interest

Background

The University of London has an international reputation as an awarding organisation operating in the highly regulated field of qualifications. As a regulated awarding organisation, the University of London is expected to have in place a conflict of interest policy that enables it to identify and manage conflict of interest.

The Policy applies to conflicts of interest which may be encountered by members of staff, including Examiners, by independent members of committees and review panels of the University of London Worldwide, and by students when they are acting in an official capacity - for example, as committee members.

The aim of this procedure is to avoid the conferring of unfair advantage on any individual students or groups of students, as well as providing a framework for Examiners experiencing a conflict of interest to place them beyond suspicion.

Definition

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual (or organisation) has competing interests or loyalties. In this context, a conflict of interest is a situation that has the potential to undermine the impartiality of a University of London Worldwide Examiner, and therefore has the potential to confer an undue advantage on an individual student or group of students, because of the Examiner's competing interests or loyalties.

Conflicts of interest can arise for Examiners in a variety of situations. For example:

- Where, in the course of discharging their examining responsibilities, the Examiner has access to information that has the potential to confer undue advantage on a subset of students when the Examiner is acting in another capacity;
- Where the Examiner serves in some advisory or review capacity, that, by virtue of that activity, has the capacity to confer undue advantage on a subset of students;
- Where matters relating to an individual with whom the Examiner has a close personal or family relationship are under specific consideration;
- Where there is the potential for the impartiality of the marking process to be undermined by a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with another examiner.

Declaring conflicts of interest

Examiners are asked to declare conflicts of interest by submitting a Register of Interests form. Examiners are required to submit a completed Register of Interests form prior to being appointed. No Examiner appointments shall be made until a Register of Interests form has been submitted. Examiners must inform relevant stakeholders (e.g. Chairs of Board of Examiners and/or the Quality Assurance Team should any conflicts arise during their contract tenure that were not initially established via the Register of Interests form).

The Register of Interests form shall be updated when an Examiner identifies new conflicts of interest. Further information can be sought by contacting the Examiner Contracts mailbox

examiner.contract@london.ac.uk. The examiner will be sent a copy of their form to update.

Submitting a Register of Interests is a key element of the **Appendix 1: Code of Practice for Examiners when Teaching Students under Private Arrangements** which Examiners agree to abide by when they are engaged by the University of London Worldwide.

In addition, at the start of each meeting the Chair will read out a statement that reminds participants of their responsibilities regarding conflicts of interest and invites any new conflicts of interest (i.e. conflicts not declared to date) that may impact on the agenda for this meeting to be declared and noted in the minutes. All previously declared conflicts of interest have been considered by the Quality Team, University of London, in conjunction with the federation member where appropriate, and where necessary the Chair, and deemed as either requiring either (i) no further action or (ii) a penalty which has been/will be imposed.

To mitigate risk the University of London Worldwide considers students at both Tier 1 and Tier 2 Boards of Examiners on an anonymous basis, so no individual student can be identified.

Categorisation of Conflicts

The procedure sets out three levels of possible conflict; low, medium and high. These are defined below:

Low

- Membership of University of London Committees;
- Panel membership for monitoring events concerning recognised teaching centres or Assessment Offences Committees.

Medium

- An Examiner who is only marking examination scripts but is also providing classes. The concern is that students can benefit from knowing what Examiners are seeking;
- An Examiner who is only marking examination scripts but is also supporting staff development activities in independent teaching institutions;
- An Examiner who is only marking examination scripts but is also devising, marking, and providing feedback on mock examinations. It is a requirement that these mock examinations are made available to all students on the VLE, as soon as possible after the exam is administered.

High

- An Examiner who sets an examination paper and is providing classes to students during the same examination session;
- An Examiner who sets an examination paper and is engaged to devise, mark, and provide feedback on mock examinations.

A record will be made of nil returns for reporting purposes.

Managing the Register of Interests: Examiners' returns

Completed Register of Interests returns from Examiners will be managed by the Quality Team, University of London. Those conflicts of interest identified as giving rise to concern (i.e. High and Medium) will be discussed with the federation member and Chair of the Boards of Examiners if appropriate.

Procedure

The flow chart on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** sets out the procedure for dealing with completed Register of Interest returns.

Evidence that conflicts of interest give rise to concern

When there is evidence that a conflict of interest may have undermined the impartiality of an University of London Worldwide Examiner and raises the possibility of an undue advantage on an individual student or group of students, because of the Examiner's competing interests or loyalties (for example, by breaching the *Code of Practice for Examiners when Teaching Students under Private Arrangements*), such evidence should be reported to the University of London Worldwide.

Such reports could be:

- Student Complaints;
- Made in confidence to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International, Teaching & Learning) or the Head of Academic Quality, University of London;
- Self-declared by the Examiner through the register of interests email address or at the Board of Examiners meeting.

Investigation of conflicts of interest giving rise to concern

An initial investigation into a situation where conflicts of interest give rise to concern will be conducted by the Head of Academic Quality, University of London, in conjunction with a representative of the federation member. Following the initial investigation, the breach will either be deemed to have been resolved or will be forwarded to a Panel for consideration.

The Panel will be chaired by an external member of the Academic Quality Assurance Committee and will include two Chairs of Board of Examiners from different subject areas. The Panel will determine if the matter has been resolved or if penalties need to be applied.

Penalties

The following penalties may be applied by the Panel:

- Withholding part or all of a payment to the Examiner;
- Removing the Examiner from the Board of Examiner and terminating their contract;
- Outcome of the investigation will be reported as appropriate;
- Banning contracting as an Examiner for a specified period.

Appendix 3: The Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles

The Track C / Standard Academic Model Assessment Marking Principles are as follows:

- All items of assessment marking (coursework, examination and project) will be subject to second marking (sampling) and moderation.
- Second marking (sampling) involves a second marker(s) assessing a sample which includes at least the following for ALL items of assessment:
 - a. all Fails;
 - b. mid-class examples for each class (mid-fifties, mid-sixties, Distinctions);
 - c. examples of all upper borderlines (49, 59, 69);
 - d. the higher of either: at least 10% of assessments, or: at least 5 assessments.
- The Module Leader will then undertake a process of moderation (taking account of the second marking process and associated comments from the second marker) which will assess the quality of the marking in general terms and consistency across markers. A short report will be prepared by the Module Leader for the External Examiner on the findings of the moderation process.