



**Guidelines for the Appointment of External Examiners (EEs) at the  
University of Rwanda's Constituent Colleges**

**Approved by the Academic Senate meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015**

## **Guidelines for the Appointment of External Examiners (EEs) at the University of Rwanda's Constituent Colleges**

### **1.0 Search Selection & Appointment**

- 1.1 It shall be the responsibility of each academic department to search for external examiners from identified reputable universities within and in the region (and where necessary, internationally), with vast experience in moderating university examination questions and evaluating internal examination assessments in the discipline in question. The Head of Department (HoD) of the relevant School at a UR College shall contact the heads of department in similar fields at identified or selected universities of good repute, for Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of possible candidates they recommend to act as EEs in their respective fields. Preferably, this should be done as early in the academic year as possible to avoid rushed last minute decisions. Colleges with a long established external examiners culture are encouraged to create a data base of all expertise that have effectively and efficiently externally examined for the College, from which to draw future external examiners. The department must ensure, however, that such examiner has had at least a minimum of one year break from the last time they served as EE to the College.
- 1.2 After careful scrutiny and assessment of the CVs of recommended candidates by a committee of specialists in the field, and following the approval of the CVs by the School Council, the department shall determine the number of external examiners required and shall recommend to the Chairperson of the College Academic Council, in writing, to invite the External Examiner(s) for the evaluation of the internal assessment of the College examinations in the relevant department. The HoD shall at the same time, inform his or her counterpart(s) from the external university, of the choice of candidate(s) soon after approval by the School Council. After notification from the Dean of the School to the College Academic

Quality Assurance Director (CDAQA) of the selected EE(s), the QA Directorate shall send to the selected EE, the **EXTERNAL EXAMINER NOMINATION FORM (see Annex 1)**, for the EE to fill in and sign. The CDAQA will first have to ensure that all necessary departmental information has been filled into the form by the relevant HoD,

- 1.3 This exercise shall be accomplished at least four months ahead of the internal moderation of the first semester examination period to allow enough time for the completion of the appointment process. School Deans and Heads of Departments shall be fully responsible for ensuring deadlines are respected and unnecessary rush or delays avoided.
- 1.4 The process of approval of appointments shall include consideration of appropriate documentation in support of nominations, to determine appropriate levels of academic and/or professional expertise and experience, in relation to the relevant subject area and assessment.
- 1.5 External examiners shall be part of the Boards of Examiners at departmental and School levels, which assess students for an award, or recommends the conferment of an award, upon a student.
- 1.6 Appointment dates for external examiners shall take account of the timing of assessments in such a way that the external examiners shall be fully involved in the assessment process from beginning to end.
- 1.7 New examiners shall take up their appointments on, or before their predecessors have completed their contractual obligations. External examiners shall remain available until the last assessment with which they are to be associated in order to deal with any subsequent reviews of decisions.

- 1.8 The College shall keep a central register/data base of external examiners' appointments and periods of tenure under the custody of the College Academic Quality Assurance Directorate, and in the relevant department, to facilitate efficient monitoring of the system.

## 2.0 **Criteria for the Selection of External Examiners**

- Must be of a rank of a Senior Lecturer or above, and from a well-recognized university. Preference will be given to candidates with a professorial rank.
- Must have at least 3 years' experience as an external examiner and at least 5 years in setting and marking examinations at university level. There may be a possibility of pairing up the more experienced with the less experienced EEs.
- Must be published in the field of study he/she is assessing.
- For those candidates supervising post-graduate students, it is imperative that they have a record of having taught at postgraduate level.

## 3.0 **Duration, Break, and Renewal of Appointment**

- 3.1 The external examiner's normal term of office shall be one which allows the Examiner to assess students for **three** successive years. This will normally mean **three calendar years**, or may be longer where necessary, but not more than four calendar years. The College shall ensure that it is able to recruit and retain suitable individuals to maintain the effectiveness of the external examining process, but the retention should not exceed one term (3 years), unless under exceptional circumstances to be determined by the School Council. A break of at least **THREE YEARS** shall be imposed between the first and second or more terms of appointment of an external examiner. Renewal of appointment shall be determined by the School Council under the guidance & leadership of the Chairperson. Former staff of UR can be appointed as External Examiners if they have not been associated with the University for at least **THREE YEARS**.

#### **4.0 Termination of Appointment**

4.1 The appointment of an external examiner may be terminated before the expiry of his/her normal term of office by approval of the College Quality Assurance Committee and on recommendation of the School Council. Such a termination of appointment shall normally be considered only on the basis of the external examiner's unwillingness or inability to fulfil his/her responsibilities laid down by the department or proven incompetence or unprofessionalism

#### **5.0 External Examiners' Workload**

5.1 Each programme shall be allowed a maximum of two external examiners. The period of assessment shall not exceed 7 days.

#### **6.0 Contractual Guidelines**

##### **6.1 On the part of the College:**

6.1.1 The Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance shall advise the new external examiners, as soon as possible, of their appointment as well as the terms of their appointment.

6.1.2 The External Examiners shall receive from the relevant Heads of Departments/Deans of Schools the necessary appropriate documentation/briefing, which shall cover the following, among others:

- Examination Regulations
- UR Academic Regulations
- Programme specification
- A copy of External Examiners annual report form
- Examination question papers with model solutions
- Selected samples of students' assessed examination scripts
- Detailed syllabus
- Marking scheme

- 6.1.3 The College, through the Academic Quality Assurance Directorate, shall advise the external examiner of any changes to the examination regulations that could directly affect students currently on the programme. The Head of Department shall also advise the external examiner of any changes to the programme or module, which could affect its assessment methods and/or regulations.
- 6.1.4 The College, through the Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance, shall provide written guidance on the content of reports by external examiners (*see External Examiners Annual Report Form*). Heads of Department shall remind external examiners of the College's guidance whenever a report is due. The EE will also be expected to give a more comprehensive narrative report of his observations geared towards areas of strength and weaknesses in the overall teaching, learning, and assessment processes.
- 6.1.5 The College, through the Finance office, shall meet its financial obligations to the external examiner. The amount of the fee payable to each category of external examiners (those from outside Rwanda, those from within) shall be at the discretion of each College, though generally, it should be equal pay for equal work no matter which category. The difference should lie in the living allowances given.

**6.2. On the part of the External Examiner:**

The external examiner shall diligently ensure that:

- 6.2.1 The syllabus for the course being assessed has been covered by the examination questions.
- 6.2.2 The examinations set are up to the standard required. The examiner must be able to judge the standard of the award impartially on the basis of work submitted for assessment, without being influenced by previous associations with the programme/module, staff, or any of the students.

- 6.3.3 The time allocated to the examination paper is adequate and within the required examination standards.
- 6.2.4 The model solutions and marking scheme provided are correct & in order.
- 6.2.5 The internal marking of scripts has been done in a uniform, fair and transparent manner.
- 6.2.6 The content and form of all Continuous Assessment Tests (CAT), including the type of questions set, nature of internal assessment, and students' overall performance, are critically analysed and reviewed.
- 6.2.7 The External Examiner is able to compare the academic standards of the College with those of courses leading to comparable awards elsewhere.
- 6.2.8 He/she is a member of the Examiners Board and attends appropriate Examiners Board meetings at which decisions on recommendations for awards are made, to ensure fairness and consistency in the decision-making process. The role of the external examiner at meetings of the Board of Examiners is particularly important in the event of disagreement on the mark to be awarded for a particular piece of assessment, or on the classification to be derived from the array of marks of a particular candidate. Meetings also provide a valuable opportunity for external examiners to offer comments and advice on any aspect of the assessment process.
- 6.2.9 The External Examiner brings to the notice of the College Principal or his designate any matters of serious concern arising from the assessments which put at risk the standard of the University awards.
- 6.2.10 He/she shall submit to the Dean of the School on an annual basis (copy to the Director for Academic Quality Assurance), a comprehensive report on the conduct of the assessments just concluded, including commentary and judgments on the validity, reliability, and integrity of the assessment process and the standards of student achievement/performance.

### **6.3. On the Part of the Department**

- 6.3.1 Departments are fully responsible for ensuring that the Quality office is provided with all necessary information and documentation in time for the effective fulfilment of the role of External Examiners as outlined. These documents shall be given to the Academic Quality Assurance Officer.
- 6.2.2. Departments shall ensure that they are not overloading external examiners, but shall also take into account the need for effective moderation by external examiners when planning assessment schemes and schedules.
- 6.2.3 Departments shall be responsible for ensuring that all written or recorded work contributing to the final award is available for external examination or comment. Where such work has been returned to students, students are responsible for retaining it in a portfolio for possible future external scrutiny, and departments are responsible for alerting students to this requirement.

## **7.0 External Examiners Scrutiny & Report**

It must be emphasized that the College attaches a great deal of importance to the external examiner's report, which is expected to address more specifically the following:

**7.1 Approval of draft examination question papers:** this shall include but shall not be limited to, the standard of the examination questions, the structure of the examination, the marking scheme and allocation of marks per question asked, module outlines, syllabi etc.

**7.2 Assessment of examination scripts.** External examiners have the right to see all examination scripts if they so wish. Where a selection of scripts is scrutinized, the principles for selection shall be UR General Academic Guidelines. These principles shall ensure that external examiners see a sample of scripts from the top, middle, and bottom of the range and have enough evidence to determine that internal marking and degree classification are of an appropriate standard and are consistent. External examiners shall normally be asked to scrutinize the scripts of borderline cases of final year candidates, cases of candidates classified internally as first class or as failures, and scripts of those candidates for whom special circumstances exist.



- 7.3 Scrutiny of other assessed work (CATs, projects, industrial/community attachments, clinical practice, teaching practice etc):** All written or recorded work contributing to the final award shall be available for external examination or comment. External examiners shall also have access to evidence relating to other work, which contributes to the final award, e.g. internal examiners' comments on oral performance in seminars, tutorials and presentations..
- 7.4 Project/written report defence examinations:** assessment of project or written reports defence will be conducted by one or more external examiners who will be assisted by one or more internal examiners. Where such an assessment is held for only a proportion of candidates, the criteria for the selection of candidates should be agreed upon with the external examiner in advance, and students concerned notified.
- 7.5 Student performance in the module assessed.
- 7.6 Overall performance of the students in relation to their peers on comparable awards elsewhere.
- 7.7 Strengths and weaknesses of students
- 7.8 Quality of general and subject-specific knowledge and skills demonstrated by students.
- 7.9 Structure, organization, design and marking of all examinations.
- 7.10 Quality of teaching as indicated by student performance
- 7.11 Lessons drawn from the assessments for the curriculum,
- 7.12 Syllabus, teaching, learning and assessment methods and resources of the programme.
- 7.13 Any other recommendations arising from the assessments.
- 7.14 The purpose of the report is to enable the College to judge whether the programme is meeting its stated objectives and to make necessary improvements either immediately or at the next review sitting as determined by College Academic Council.
- 7.15 The external examiners have the authority to report directly to the Chairperson of the Academic Council if there is concern over standards of assessment and performance, particularly where they consider that assessments are being conducted in a way that jeopardizes either the fair treatment of individual students or the standard of the

University's awards. However, this should be done only on the understanding that the normal channels of communication (staff in charge of the course, Head of Department or School Dean, Director of Academic Quality Assurance) have already been exhausted or where such normal channels are inappropriate. Indeed the EE report may have implications for the way in which the program is designed and delivered. However, ultimately, it is for the Department or the School, rather than the external examiner, to decide what changes should be made as a result.

- 7.16 External examining is a vital means of maintaining standards and providing information on outcomes for use in annual program review, a good process which shall be practiced at all levels of each College. The role of the external examiner is to report to the department or the School on student outcomes as shown through assessment. The role of the department is to make use of the EE comments to improve and enhance the quality of the examination assessment practice.
- 7.16 External examiners' reports will always form part of the documentation used in annual program reviews, and the School will scrutinize both the reports and the records of the responses to them. Copies of these records should be kept in the Library, and at the Academic Quality Assurance and Examinations Offices for future reference.

## **8.0 Reporting Procedure**

- 8.1 The College shall require each external examiner to submit to the Chairperson of the Academic Council on the last day of the external assessment exercise, a completed, filled-in EXTERNAL EXAMINERS ANNUAL REPORT FORM (see Annex II) with pre-prepared questions. The EE shall also submit a more comprehensive written report not later than TWO weeks from the last day of completing the evaluation of assessment exercise covering both the moderation of examination question papers and the evaluation of internal assessments. At the end of the examiner's three-year term of office, the report shall be extended to cover the entire examining period.
- 8.2 The standard report form provided shall be completed as comprehensively as possible and also submitted directly to the Chairperson of the Academic Council. Copies will then be sent to the appropriate Head of Department, the Director of Academic Quality

Assurance, and the Examinations Office. Submission of a more comprehensive report to the chairperson of the Academic Council shall be expected latest two after the visit.

## 9.0 Remuneration Modalities

9.1 Remuneration for external examiners for work accomplished when moderating examination question papers of both semesters/trimesters and the evaluation of internal assessment shall be done at the end of the academic year.

The remuneration to shall adhere to the following:

- The College shall meet all **travel expenses** to and from Kigali. Air travel shall be by economy class.
- The College shall meet **accommodation and meals expenses** for the duration of the External Examiner's visit which shall not exceeding 7 days except under extenuating circumstances
- Upon submission of an External Examiner's report, the College shall pay an **honorarium** based on the following formula:
  - a. For moderation of question papers, the sum of **FRW 10,000 per question paper moderated.**
  - b. For checking student answer scripts, **FRW 10,000 per module, per group.**
  - c. For checking undergraduate reports or studio portfolio and presentations, **FRW 30,000 per group, or per studio, or per project-based course.**
  - d. For reviewing a Master's thesis/dissertation, **RWF 30,000 per report.**
  - e. For miscellaneous travel expenses, **a flat rate of \$200**

*Fees shall only be authorized for payment upon receipt of a signed report from the relevant Head of department.*

## 10.0 Feedback from Heads of Department:

Departments shall be responsible for ensuring that within a reasonable time (e.g. two weeks from the receipt of the report), external examiners are provided with a response to their comments and recommendations, including information on a detailed consideration of their reports, and an indication of any action taken or to be taken as a

result of the report, or clear reasons for not accepting any recommendations or suggestions. This kind of feedback is very crucial to quality improvement.

## **11.0 Review of External Examiners' Comments**

- 11.1 External examiners' reports shall be considered at appropriate Examiners' Boards (Departmental, School, College), by the Academic Quality Assurance Committee, and by the Academic Council. In addition, the College shall require all Schools to carry out an annual documented review of their undergraduate degree programmes and submit these reports to the Academic Quality Assurance Office for further consideration.
- 11.2 The review report shall be submitted by the Deans to the Academic Quality Assurance Committee each year for monitoring of the review process, and for monitoring the implementation of plans of action which departments propose to improve on, and correct noted deficiencies during the programme provision.
- 11.3 The Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance which takes forward any major College-wide issues of significant concern to the Chairperson, Academic Council, shall also scrutinize all external Examiners' reports and present an overall summary report to the Academic Council for consideration, and where necessary, recommendation for further action. Areas for improvement are expected to inform An Action Plan for improvement for the following academic year.

## **12.0 Confidential Matters**

Reports of external examiners in narrative form and in shorter form on the **External Examiners Annual Report Form**, shall normally be available for discussion widely and in general, within the College. In such a case therefore, it should not be possible to identify individuals in these reports. However, in exceptional circumstances, an

additional, separate and confidential report may be submitted to the Principal, if an external examiner considers this appropriate and necessary, such as highly confidential matters related to individuals. Such reports shall be dealt with outside the normal committee procedures.

  
Prof. Nelson Ijumba

Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research



**ANNEX I: EXTERNAL EXAMINER NOMINATION FORM****DEPARTMENT** \_\_\_\_\_**SCHOOL** \_\_\_\_\_*Please arrange for the under mentioned to be appointed as an External Examiner.***SECTION A- THE NOMINEE (to be completed by the nominee)**

<b>Name and Title</b>	
<b>Work Address</b>	
<b>Work Email Address</b>	
<b>Work Telephone No</b>	
<b>Home Address</b>	
<b>Home Email Address</b>	
<b>Home Telephone Number</b>	
<b>Preferred point of contact</b>	WORK /HOME: (please delete as appropriate)

**SECTION B- NATURE OF APPOINTMENT (to be completed by the Department)**

1. Please give details of the award/s, programme/s or unit/s/course(as appropriate) covered by the work of the External Examiner;

*Approved by Senate meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015*

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2. Year of study at which the external examiner will be working (*please mark what is applicable*)

Undergraduate  Postgraduate  Diploma  Certificate \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION C- PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT (to be completed by the Department)**

The period of appointment for External Examiners be three years. For evaluating internal assessment of examination scripts, Dr/Mr/Ms/Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ is appointed to act as an external examiner for a period of one week starting from----- to -----.

Date of Examining-----

Date Report is expected -----

**SECTION D- ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (to be completed by the Department)**

1. If the new appointee is directly replacing another external examiner whose appointment is ending, please give the name of the outgoing external examiner -----  
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2. Please give the name of an appropriate contact person in the department to whom the external examiner shall be directed for further information.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION E - APPROVAL PROCESS

The nominated examiner shall refer to the *Guidelines for Appointment of External Examiners* of taught programmes which outlines the College's procedures and requirements of the roles of parties involved.

For quality assurance purposes, the School Council and the College must be satisfied that the nominee is appropriate for this post. The accuracy of the following must be confirmed therefore by signing below:

1. A copy of the nominee's CV is attached.
2. The nominee does not hold an unreasonable number of other appointments
3. Level and subject of qualifications obtained by the nominee are appropriate to the provision
4. The nominee has sufficient range and scope of experience in higher education external examining and other forms of assessment, or other relevant profession
5. The nominee has experience of examining work at the level of the award.
6. Except under special circumstances, an EE cannot serve as external examiner in any given college beyond the maximum term of three years, at least not until one year has elapsed since his/her last assessment.

**Head of Department of nominee:** I confirm that the statements above are accurate

Signed:

Date:

Name:

**Nominated External Examiner:** I confirm that the statements above are accurate.

Signed:

Date:



Name:

**School Dean:** I confirm that the above appointment has been approved by the School Council

Signed:

Date:

*Please return a completed copy to:*

*The Academic Quality Assurance Office (email address & telephone number)*

*College Name & Campus:*

*University of Rwanda*

**ANNEX II. EXTERNAL EXAMINERS ANNUAL REPORT FORM:**

**ACADEMIC YEAR .....**

**SECTION 1**

**Personal Information**

Please complete this form and return it to the Head of Department, copy to the Director, Academic Quality Assurance.

NAME .....

ADDRESS.....

EMAIL ADDRESS.....

HOME UNIVERSITY.....

DEGREE COURSE/SUBJECT EXAMINED .....

*Approved by Senate meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015*

TENURE: .....

1. If you were in post during the previous year, did you receive appropriate feedback from the Head of Department and/or Module leader on your report? \_\_\_\_\_ -  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION 2**

### **Information on Key Documentation**

- a. Were you given adequate information on the aims and content of the programme(s), modules, and course(s) allocated to you?-----
- b. Were you given the Learning and Teaching strategy of the modules/course(s) allocated to you?-----
- c. Did you receive details of the following items in good time to provide adequate feedback to the staff involved?
- Course outlines-----
  - Draft Examination papers for moderation-----
  - Marking schemes-----
  - Marking Criteria-----
  - Examination scripts-----
  - Continuous Assessment summary sheets as appropriate, for example, tests, assignments, laboratory work, quizzes-----

## **SECTION 3:**

*Approved by Senate meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015*

**Assessment and Examination Process**

Please comment on the following:

1. The appropriateness of course structure and content, including the appropriateness of the learning objectives of the programme and all its elements to its educational aims and those of the students;-----  
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2. Clarity of Learning Outcomes or competences and their appropriateness to the level of study-----  
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3. Effectiveness of teaching and teaching methods.-----  
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4. Assessment methods, coverage of syllabus, and whether the assessment processes and marking schemes applied by internal examiners are appropriate and appropriately used;---  
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5. Comment on the administration of all assessed work by internal examiners, including the time made available for marking and the impartiality and clarity with which the assessments were conducted;-----

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6 The standard of students' performance in terms of their knowledge, skills and understanding of subject matter and in comparison with those students on similar programmes of study in other universities elsewhere;-----

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7. The standard of particular degree classifications awarded and in comparison with similar awards at other reputable higher education institutions;-----

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8. The procedures followed by Departmental & School Board of Examiners and the adequacy of the level of participation by external examiners in the assessment process, including the time availed to perform your role.-----  
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9. Any other useful comments/advice you feel you must include for purposes of motivation and/or improvement-----  
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Signature of External Examiner \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Head of Department \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the School Dean

Signature of the College Director of Academic Quality Assurance

Signature of the Principal as Chairperson of the Academic Council \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_