

Regent College London

Policy and procedure for the recruitment and appointment of external advisers and committee members

Introduction and purpose of this document

1. According to the norms and expectations of the UK higher education sector, Regent College makes extensive use of external advisers and committee members in the maintenance of academic standards and the enhancement of students' learning experiences.
2. The value of externality lies in the external person's ability to provide good quality input based on extensive expertise and expertise in the subject or area in question free of any inappropriate or extraneous influence or bias. It is imperative, therefore, that the externals we use are sufficiently qualified and experienced for their roles and do not have other interests which could compromise their ability to contribute objectively and impartially. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to make sure our externals meet these requirements.
3. This document applies to the recruitment and appointment of all external advisers, committee members and others involved in the College's academic governance and quality assurance and enhancement processes. It does **not** apply to external examiners, for whom we have a separate policy and procedure.

Responsibilities for recruitment and nomination

- External advisers for programme approval and reapproval should be identified and nominated by the relevant programme development team.
- External members of the College's committees are identified and nominated by the Academic Services team.

Knowledge and experience

4. In its advice and guidance on External Expertise, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education suggests that all external examiners should demonstrate the following criteria:
 - a high degree of competence and experience in the fields covered by the course of study, or parts thereof, and a good understanding of the UK higher education sector
 - appropriate experience in course design and student assessment at the level of the award
 - the necessary academic experience and subject knowledge to assess standards in an effective manner, identify good practice and recommend enhancements to enable informed course development
 - experience in acting as an external examiner (or support by the provider in undertaking their duties, for example, through training and mentoring)
 - impartiality in judgement and independence of the provider and its staff (including the governing body), and any relevant partners
 - no personal benefit from any student outcomes, nor any connection to any student being assessed

- sufficient experience in quality assurance to enable them to discharge their role effectively
- drawn from a relevant variety of institutional or professional contexts and traditions in order that the course benefits from wide-ranging external scrutiny
- compliance with all relevant employment legislation, including safeguarding, as appropriate
- holding a limited number of concurrent external examining engagements (for example either one or two).

5. The knowledge and experience required of other external roles may diverge from these criteria depending on the nature of the role. Nevertheless, these criteria provide a helpful starting point for specifying the qualities required of all external roles. Whoever is responsible for identifying and nominating externals must develop an appropriate set of criteria for applicants to be assessed against before the role is advertised.

Recruitment and application

6. In order both to maximise the pool of candidates for external roles, and reduce the potential for conflicts of interest, it is good practice for such vacancies to be advertised publicly rather than only within or to certain networks or contacts. There are various online platforms for advertising external roles – some of them free of charge – and the College's public website may also be used.

7. Any advertisement should include, or be accompanied by, a brief description of the role and the knowledge and experience sought. Applicants should be asked to submit an expression of interest setting out how they believe their knowledge and experience compares to what the College needs.

Conflicts of interest

8. To avoid conflicts of interest:

- The nomination of an external must not constitute a reciprocal relationship with a different higher education provider.
- The nominee must not be from the same institution as his or her predecessor.
- Current members of College staff or members of the governing body or other College committees, or members of staff or committees at the College's awarding bodies, are not eligible to act as externals.
- Former academic staff or students of the College and its awarding bodies may not be externals before at least five years has elapsed.
- Externals should not have any previous or current close involvement with the College (whether professional, personal or contractual) that might compromise their objectivity (for example, a nominee should not be a close relative of a student or member of staff of the College).

Nominations process

9. Whoever is responsible for identifying the external is also responsible for selecting and nominating the best candidate based on how well they meet the specified criteria for the role.

10. All externals must be formally nominated using the standard nomination form (at Annex A).

11. Completed nomination forms for external advisers for programme approval and reapproval should be submitted to the Head of Academic Services, who will compare the information in the form against the selection criteria and determine whether the external should be appointed.

12. Completed nomination forms for external members of committees should be submitted to the Clerk to the Board, who will compare the information in the form against the selection criteria and determine whether the external should be appointed. This is to avoid Academic Services being responsible for both nominating and approving external committee members.

Appointment

13. Once approved as described above, whoever is responsible for identifying the external is also responsible for confirming with them that they have been appointed, sending and receiving the contract for the role, making arrangements to brief them, and thanking any unsuccessful applicants for taking the trouble to apply.¹

14. We provide a standard letter/email for the appointment of external members of committees (at Annex B) and similar for external advisers (at Annex C), both of which may be tailored as necessary.

Terms of office

15. Terms of office for external members of committees are dealt with in the rules of procedure and conduct for the College's academic governance system.

Fees and expenses

16. External members of the College's committees are entitled to an attendance fee per meeting attended. They are also entitled to reasonable travel and subsistence expenses should they be required to attend a meeting in person at the College.

17. The fees for external advisers for programme approvals and reapprovals will be agreed on an ad hoc basis based on the nature and amount of work required.

18. Please contact Academic Services for more information about fees and expenses.

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¹ HR can provide support and guidance on the contractual arrangements. Normally, externals will be regarded as self-employed.

Annex A

External nomination form

Name of external nominee	
Proposed role at the College	
Current job title and employer	
Please provide details of the knowledge and experience sought by the College and how the nominee meets these criteria.	
Please confirm that the nominee:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is not be from the same institution as his or her predecessor 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is not a current members of staff, or member of the governing body or other College committees or its awarding bodies 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has not been a member of staff or student at the College within the last five year 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not have any previous or current close involvement with the College that might compromise their objectivity. 	
Nomination form submitted by (please provide name and job title)	
Date	
Nomination form considered by (please provide name and job title)	
Date	
Nomination approved or rejected	
If rejected, please explain why	

Annex B

Standard text for the confirmation of the appointment of an external committee member

Dear [name of nominee],

On behalf of the Principal and Board of Governors of Regent College, may I congratulate you on your appointment as a member of the College's [name of committee].

According to the College's rules of procedure and conduct, you are eligible to serve for three years from the date of the first meeting you are eligible to attend, and for re-appointment on one more occasion for a second three-year term.

I will now ask the secretary of the committee to make contact with you, to provide you with dates of the committee's forthcoming meetings.

In the meantime, please find attached the committee's terms of reference, the College's rules of procedure and conduct and our general guide for committee members.

Once again, congratulations on your appointment and thank you for supporting Regent College.

Kind regards,

Annex C

Standard text for the confirmation of the appointment of an external adviser

Dear [name of nominee],

On behalf of the Principal and Board of Governors of Regent College, may I congratulate you on your appointment as an external advisor for the [details of programme approval/reapproval] and thank you for supporting the College.

We expect to send you the information we would like you to comment on by [date], and would ask you to provide your comments by [date] in time for the next meeting of the College's Programme Approval and Review Committee.

Please find attached the template we would like you to provide your comments on, which will give you an idea of the areas we would like you to cover.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Once again, congratulations on your appointment and thank you for supporting Regent College.

Kind regards,