External Examiner guidance: Sharing undergraduate and postgraduate external examiner reports

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Purpose	This document provides guidance to External Examiners, School/department staff and students on sharing External Examiner annual reports.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.3	Re-formatting document	Updated	Karen Murphy, Academic Policy Officer (Quality), Education and Student Experience	December 2022

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

External Examiner Guidance

**Sharing Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught
External Examiner Reports**

From academic year 2020-2021, Schools and Departments are required to publish their External Examiner reports in Moodle to provide students the opportunity to engage in discussion and consideration of this element of the assessment process. This will complement the existing practice of sharing External Examiner feedback and related actions at Student Staff Consultative Committee meetings (SSCCs).

The following guidance is provided for External Examiners, staff in Schools/Departments, School Presidents and students. Flowcharts illustrating the process (including timescales) upon receipt of the External Examiner reports for both undergraduate and postgraduate taught are also provided on pages 4 and 5 of this document.

1. Guidance for External Examiners

The External Examiners' reports are made available to all staff and students in each School/Department. External Examiners should not identify specific individuals in their reports, though reference to individual modules is acceptable where this is appropriate. Identifying individuals may lead to the University breaching its obligations under data protection law.

2. Guidance for School/Department staff

Once the Head of School (or delegate) has responded to the External Examiner, the annual report is ready for publishing to staff/students. Heads of School (or delegate) should be aware that responses to the reports will be published.

The Head of School (or delegate) should notify staff/students that External Examiner reports are available for viewing.

To publish, the annual report should be downloaded from MySaint, any information about a specific individual redacted, and uploaded to the School/Department's External Examiners' Moodle course. Please follow the four steps below.

Firstly, please note:

- to allow a member of staff to access External Examiner reports in MySaint contact external@st-andrews.ac.uk
- to allow a member of staff access to upload External Examiner reports to Moodle contact Margaret Adamson (mhma@st-andrews.ac.uk).

Step 1: Downloading reports from MySaint

1. Click on 'Download Final Report (PDF)'
2. Save annual report.

Step 2: Redacting personal information using PDF Editor Software

1. Open the annual report with PDF Editor Software (NitroPDF Pro is available in the University's Apps Anywhere portal)
2. Redact any information using 'Erase', 'Mark for Redaction' and then 'Apply All Redactions'
3. Save annual report.

If you are unable to access PDF Editor Software, the annual report should be printed, and any personal information manually redacted (using a black marker pen). The annual report should be scanned and saved.

Once the PDFs have been downloaded, they should be uploaded to the School/Department's External Examiners' Moodle course.

Step 3: Uploading the reports to Moodle

1. Enter the course and click 'Turn editing on' in the Administration block on the right-hand side.
2. Click the small grey arrow to the left of either the 'Undergraduate' or 'Postgraduate' sections to expand it.
3. In your computer's file manager, select either a single or, multiple files and drag and drop them into the expanded section.
4. Wait for file upload to complete before leaving the page.

Step 4: Publishing the reports

The External Examiners' courses are currently hidden from students. Once they have been populated as above, the settings need to be changed so that the course is available to students:

1. Click 'Edit settings' in the Administration block on the right-hand side.
2. In the top 'General' section, select 'Show' from the 'Course visibility' dropdown.
3. Scroll down and click 'Save and display'.

3. Guidance for students and School Presidents

External Examiner reports are produced annually and ensure quality and standards in learning, teaching, curriculum design and assessment in academic Schools. This reporting process involves scrutiny of examining practices and processes by respected academics from other universities in order to ensure that appropriate academic standards are satisfied. The reports are received by the Head of School (or delegate) who is required to submit a written response.

Students are able to view External Examiner reports and School/Department responses in the My Courses section on MySaint.

The reports are discussed at SSCC in order that student representatives may view them and make any recommendations from a student perspective. External Examiner reports for Undergraduate courses are normally included as an agenda item at SSCCs in Semester 1, while the reports for Postgraduate Taught courses are normally included as an agenda item at SSCCs in Semester 2.
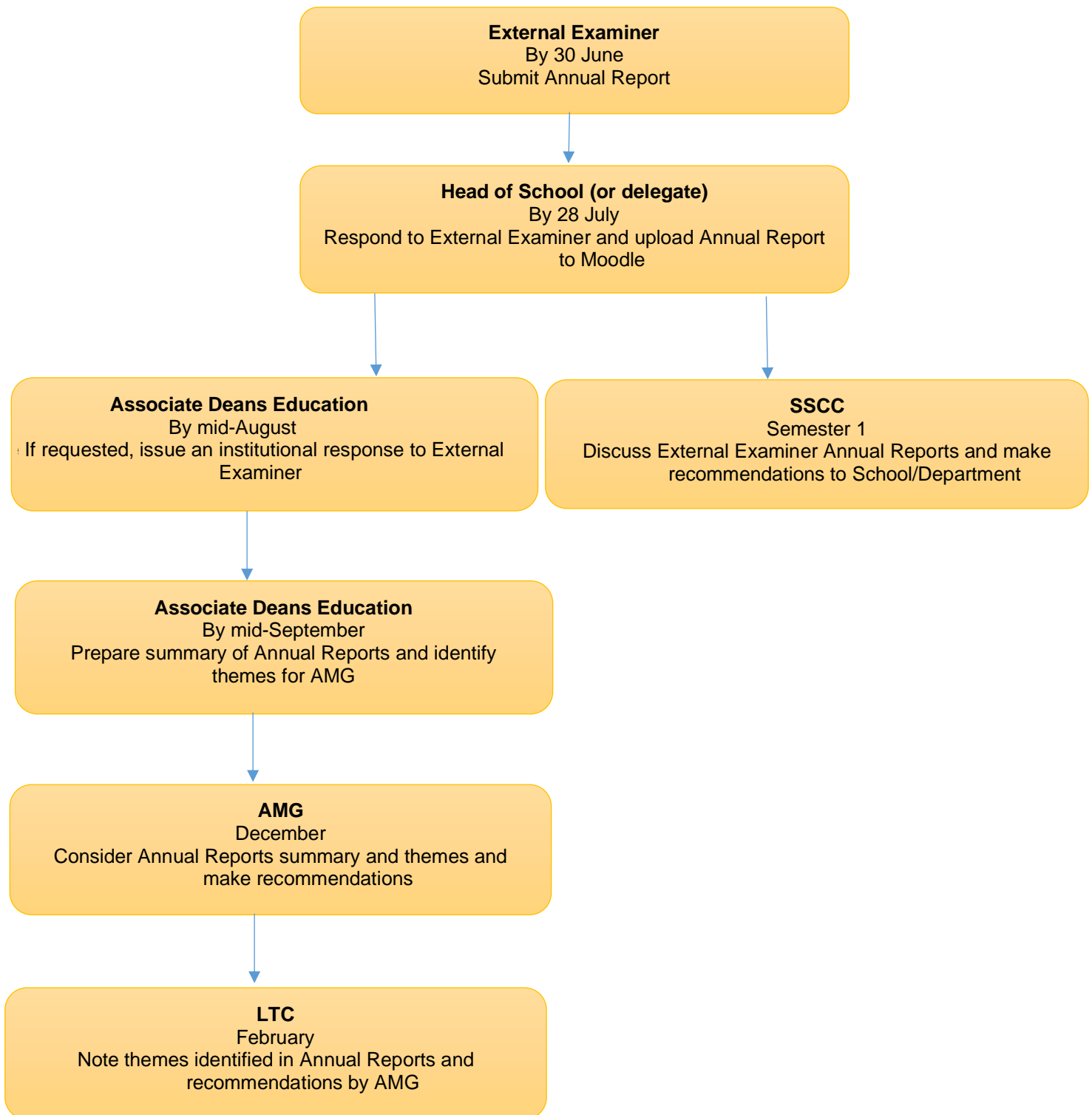
In advance of the SSCC, External Examiner reports should be circulated to all attendees alongside the agenda to enable all student representatives to view the reports prior to the

meeting. During the SSCC, the meeting chair (usually the School President) should ask the Head of School/Director of Teaching/Director of Postgraduate (Taught) if there are any aspects of the reports they wish to highlight or areas of good practice which they would like to share. The Minutes representative should ensure that any areas of good practice highlighted are recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Additionally, the Chair should ask the Class Representatives if they have any comments or questions from the reports, or any recommendations which they think the School should consider. The Director of Education will explain this process to School Presidents as part of their training.

4. Copyright

External Examiner reports remain the copyright of the University, they should not be reproduced and/or disseminated, in any form, without first seeking the permission of the University. Any questions on reuse of these reports can be sent to academicmonitoring@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Process of Undergraduate External Examiner Report upon receipt from External Examiner.

External Examiner
By 30 June
Submit Annual Report

Head of School (or delegate)
By 28 July
Respond to External Examiner and upload Annual Report to Moodle

Associate Deans Education
By mid-August
If requested, issue an institutional response to External Examiner

SSCC
Semester 1
Discuss External Examiner Annual Reports and make recommendations to School/Department

Associate Deans Education
By mid-September
Prepare summary of Annual Reports and identify themes for AMG

AMG
December
Consider Annual Reports summary and themes and make recommendations

LTC
February
Note themes identified in Annual Reports and recommendations by AMG

Process of Postgraduate Taught External Examiner Report upon receipt from External Examiner.

External Examiner
By 31 October
Submit Annual Report

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Head of School (or delegate)
By 28 November
Respond to External Examiner and upload Annual Report to Moodle

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Associate Provost Education
By mid-December
Where requested, issue an institutional response to External Examiner

SSCC
Semester 1 or 2
Discuss External Examiner Annual Reports and make recommendations to School/Department

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Associate Provost Education
By mid-January
Prepare summary of Annual Reports and identify themes for AMG

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AMG
February
Consider Annual Reports summary and themes and make recommendations

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LTC
February
Note themes identified in Annual Reports and recommendations by AMG

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	Changes to titles/contact details to reflect decanal restructuring	Updated	-	February 2021
1.1	Changes to Associate Provost titles	Updated	Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principals Office	August 2021
1.2	Clarification of notification process when reports are available to view	Updated	Jennifer Norris, Administrative Officer, Proctor's Office	December 2021
1.3	Re-formatting document	Updated	Karen Murphy, Academic Policy Officer (Quality), Education and Student Experience	December 2022