



# Heythrop College

The Specialist Philosophy and Theology College  
of the University of London

# **Handbook for External and Intercollegiate Examiners**

2017-18

## **SECTION 1: THE COLLEGE AND ITS CONTEXT**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The College welcomes and values the opinions of external examiners and looks forward to working with all external examiners during their period of appointment. This Handbook has been produced to help external examiners undertake their role and understand it in the College context. This and other information can be accessed electronically on the College's Virtual Learning Environment, Helios.

### **2. THE COLLEGE**

- 2.1 Heythrop College University of London has been a full college of the University of London since 1970, although its history as a Jesuit foundation goes back to 1614. The College is open to those of all faiths and those with no faith beliefs.

As announced on 26th June 2015, Heythrop will cease to be a College of the University of London in the summer of 2018. The College will continue to fully discharge of all its responsibilities to our current students until the end of the academic year 2017/18. The College will also support any students who have resits or other study post September 2018. We will be remaining on our current site until October 2018 but there is no plan for the move of any departments or a continuation of Heythrop College anywhere else.

For further information on the College and its history please see the College web pages:

<http://www.heythrop.ac.uk/about-us>

- 2.2 Details of all programmes, including programme specifications and module outlines, are available by following the links on the External Examiners' Helios pages or on the College website at:

<http://www.heythrop.ac.uk/governance-policies/programme-documentation>

- 2.3 Structurally the College is headed by the Principal, Professor Claire Ozanne, assisted by the Vice Principal (Academic) Dr Peter Gallagher. There are two departments, Philosophy and Theology, each with a Head of Department –Dr Stephen Law for Philosophy and Dr Martin Poulosom for Theology. Departmental Boards meet each term to consider a range of business, including academic matters relating to the programmes within the responsibility of the Department. Departments are responsible for nominating new external examiner appointments to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee, and consider external examiners' annual reports as part of the Annual Programme Review process.
- 2.4 The College has approved a Credit and Assessment Framework (CAF) which assigns all of its academic provision to the academic levels of the Chapter A1 *The National Level* of the QAA Quality Code, which has subsumed the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern

Ireland (FHEQ)<sup>1</sup>. (see below section 3.1). At undergraduate level differentiation is indicated by learning outcomes and assessment specific to each academic level indicated on the module specification. Assessment patterns have been approved by the College and are available by following the links on the External Examiners' Helios pages.

Students taught at different academic levels in the same module will have their performance assessed at their level of study. Information on the CAF is available on the External Examiners' Helios pages.

- 2.5 For information on College strategies, regulations and committee structures and minutes please see the links on the External Examiners' Helios pages or at: <http://www.heythrop.ac.uk/about-us/governance-policies>
- 2.6 The College had a successful QAA Institutional Audit in April 2011, and the report is available by following the links on the External Examiners' Helios pages or at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Pages/Heythrop-College.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Pages/Heythrop-College.aspx). The Action Plan to address issues from the report is monitored regularly by the Learning and Teaching Committee.

### **3. THE NATIONAL EXTERNAL EXAMINING CONTEXT**

- 3.1 We endorse and work within the Expectations and Precepts of the QAA's *UK Quality Code for Higher Education examining, Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality, Chapter B7: External examining* which is available by following the links on the External Examiners' HELIOS pages or at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>
- 3.2 In terms of external examining, we refer especially to: Chapter A5 *Externality*, which is available by following the links on the External Examiners' Helios pages or at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-a>
- and Chapter B7 *External examining* which is available by following the links on the External Examiners' Helios pages or at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>
- 3.3 The Expectation from Chapter A5 *Externality* states: "Higher Education Providers ensure independent and external participation in the management of threshold academic standards"
- 3.4 The Expectation from Chapter B7 *External Examining* states : "Higher Education providers make scrupulous use of External Examiners"

<sup>1</sup> QAA Quality Code Chapter A1 The National Level published December 2011, at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-A1.aspx> and Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England Wales and Northern Ireland, 2000. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationandGuidance/Pages/The-framework-for-higher-education-qualifications-in-England-Wales-and-Northern-Ireland.aspx>

### 3.5 Standards

The College endorses the following Expectation from the QAA Quality Code Chapter A1 and has mapped all awards to this reference point.

“Each qualification (including those awarded under collaborative arrangements) is allocated to the appropriate level in the FHEQ or FQHEIS, as applicable”

The College also endorses the following statements from Chapter B7 *External Examining*:

#### “Threshold standards

Throughout this Chapter reference is made to threshold academic standards. The following is the definition applicable within the Quality Code:

Threshold academic standards are the level of achievement that a student has to reach to gain an academic award. For equivalent awards, the threshold level of achievement should be the same across the UK.

#### General principles

As part of their joint review of external examining in the UK in 2010-11, UUK and GuildHE agreed with higher education institutions the following general principles for external examining.

**Principle 1:** In the UK higher education system, each institution with degree awarding powers has responsibility for setting the standards of its degrees within the context of common guidelines (that is, subject benchmark statements, professional body requirements, and so on) and is subject to internal quality assurance procedures and external review by an independent agency (QAA). This should continue to be supported and strengthened. External examining is only one part, albeit a very important part, of this system.

**Principle 2:** Notwithstanding their autonomy, it is right that institutions should be accountable for the way in which they exercise their responsibility for setting and maintaining standards. The principal mechanism for this is Institutional review, which should test whether or not external examining is working in practice. External examining arrangements should remain one of the key areas for Institutional review and a critical factor in determining the outcome of Institutional review.

**Principle 3:** The role of the external examiner should be comprehensible to students, the media and the general public. Explanations of it should be articulated clearly and simply at all times. More nationally consistent, developed and supported external examining expectations will improve the effectiveness, transparency and credibility of the system, especially with external audiences.”

## 4. WORKING WITH STUDENTS

4.1 The College is proud of its close and positive relationship with its students, including the Heythrop Students’ Union, and see students as partners in their learning. This year the HSU co-presidents are Mr Matthew Holland and Mr Henry Edwards-Xu. The HSU co-presidents receive a copy of each external examiner’s annual report. The College has student representatives on most major College committees, including departmental boards.

- 4.2 Students are asked to evaluate their learning experience at module level, and may also be asked to participate in other College surveys from time to time.
- 4.3 Partly to enhance student understanding of their learning, and also to address recommendations of the QAA Institutional Audit in 2011, the College shares external examiners' reports, and the College commentary on them, with all students. They are made accessible to students on programme pages on Helios, the College's VLE. For this reason we ask external examiners not to refer to individual students or members of staff by name in their report.

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## SECTION 2: INFORMATION FOR EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

### 5. INTRODUCTION TO EXTERNAL EXAMINING AT HEYTHROP COLLEGE

- 5.1 In line with other Higher Education providers in the UK, Heythrop regards external examiners as a significant element of its quality assurance and enhancement processes. This is one of several ways in which those external to the College - and in many cases also external to the University of London - contribute to the maintenance of standards and the enhancement of the quality of students' learning opportunities.
- 5.2 The College values and respects the views and inputs of external examiners but maintains sole responsibility for academic standards of its awards.
- 5.3 Throughout this document the term "external examiner" will cover external and intercollegiate examiners, as the University of London Ordinances encourage us "whenever in the view of the College it is practical and appropriate" – also to appoint to each Examination Board an intercollegiate examiner from another College of the University<sup>2</sup>, who shares the role of external examiners, but has an additional responsibility in relation to consistency of standards within the University

### 6. THIS HANDBOOK

- 6.1 This Handbook is designed to support those who have been appointed as external examiners at Heythrop College, University of London.
- 6.2 External examiners normally receive this Handbook at the time of their appointment and as an annual update. Other information is sent during the year. It is also available on the External Examiners' section within Helios.

### 7. TERM OF OFFICE

- 7.1 Normally, an external examiner appointment is for four years, renewed annually, with the possibility of an extension for a fifth and final year, subject to approval by the College and with the agreement of the External Examiner. **However, during the teach out period external examiners have had extended terms of appointment to see the College and students through to closure.** External examiners are approved by the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee, or its Chair, on behalf of the Academic Board, on the recommendation of the Departmental Board responsible for the subject area or programme.
- 7.2 Appointments are reconfirmed at the start of each academic year and are subject to the satisfactory discharge of duties by the external examiner, including the submission of an annual report.

### 8. PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL EXAMINER

- 8.1 External examiners should be persons whose seniority, experience and expertise in their field inspire confidence that they can contribute with authority and impartiality to assuring comparability of standards and fairness to students.

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<sup>2</sup> University of London Ordinance 15

- 8.2 External examiners should not normally hold more than two substantial first degree external examinerships, or equivalent.
- 8.3 The College will make every effort to avoid close reciprocal external examining relationships. For this reason, an external examiner will not normally be appointed from a department in an institution where a member of Heythrop staff is serving as an external examiner in the same field, although exceptions may be unavoidable in the case of subjects taught only in a very small number of institutions. Successive external examiner appointments in the same subject area will not be made from the same institution, unless the Academic Board agrees that this is unavoidable.
- 8.4 To ensure that external examiners are demonstrably impartial, a former member of Heythrop staff, or an ex-student, may not be appointed as an external examiner before a lapse of at least three years, or sufficient time for all students taught by that former member of staff to have completed their studies if this is longer. A five year interval is preferable, if circumstances permit.
- 8.5 While it is recognized that specialists in a small subject field will have contacts with colleagues in other institutions, the College will not appoint as an external examiner anyone whose current or immediate past links with staff at the College might call their impartiality into question.
- 8.6 External examiners are asked to declare, at the time of their nomination or subsequently, any connection with any student registered on a programme to which they are appointed, whether that connection is personal or professional.
- 8.7 External examiners must have current or very recent experience of current assessment practice in higher education. For this reason, external examiners who have retired from an academic post will not normally be appointed, except where it is clear that their continuing involvement in higher education ensures familiarity with current practice.
- 8.8 External examining requires both subject expertise at the relevant level and also familiarity with assessment and with the standards expected at that level, including those specified in national reference points such as Chapter A1 *The National Level* of the QAA Quality Code, which has subsumed the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)<sup>3</sup>.
- 8.9 Some external examiners, chosen for their expertise in the subject field, may currently be working outside higher education. It is not essential for every external examiner to offer *both* directly relevant subject expertise *and* familiarity with published Higher Education reference points – but both perspectives need

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3 QAA Quality Code Chapter A1 The National Level published December 2011, at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-A1.aspx> and Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England Wales and Northern Ireland, 2000. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationandGuidance/Pages/The-framework-for-higher-education-qualifications-in-England-Wales-and-Northern-Ireland.aspx>

to be represented in assessment design and decisions.

## 9. SCOPE OF THE ROLE

- 9.1 The role of external examiners is primarily advisory: they do not themselves assess students. The advisory role relates mainly to *assessment*—including, for example, the clarity, appropriateness, standard and fairness of the tasks set, and moderation (mainly through sampling) of how they have been marked. External examiners are expected to take a view on the appropriateness of procedures relating to assessment, and confirm that standards are appropriate and in line with national expectations.
- 9.2 External examiners do not have the power to require changes to curricula or to assessment regulations but the College works within the requirement of the University Ordinances require they “be fully involved and particularly influential in the decisions relating to the award of every degree”. The College undertakes to ensure that the advice of external examiners is taken seriously, and that they are kept informed of the College’s response to their advice.
- 9.3 In brief, external examiners will be asked to:
1. Confirm academic standards of awards
  2. Confirm the standard of student achievement
  3. Confirm that assessment processes are appropriate and effective
  4. Comment, if required, on changes to modules or programmes, especially, but not only, in relation to assessment
  5. Contribute to College consultations on matters relating to programmes, assessment, academic standards, strategies, policies and procedures.
- 9.4 For taught postgraduate provision:  
Usually, an external examiner will be allocated the responsibility for a whole programme leading to an award. In some cases an external examiner may be appointed with responsibility for a proportion of the study leading to an award, if the curriculum is broad. In either case, one examiner will have the responsibility to take an overview of the whole programme.
- 9.5 For undergraduate provision:  
There are two levels of examining at undergraduate level:
1. Subject level examiners responsible for overseeing assessment in a specialist academic area for one or more module.
  2. Additionally some will act as programme examiners for one or more programme.

All examiners will have responsibility for a selection of modules, which may contribute to more than one named award. Some may be asked to additionally take responsibility for one or more named awards for which they will receive an extra payment. This is to ensure that the standards of the subject area are maintained, and that a judgment on the standard of each named award, and an overview of the student experience on it, can be made.

## 10. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN EXTERNAL EXAMINER

- 10.1 While the academic scope of each role may vary, in general the expectations on

an external examiner at Heythrop College are as follows:

1. Attend induction or updating events as invited by the College or participate in on line induction activities
2. Familiarise themselves with College procedures, regulations and the elements of the curriculum for which the external examiner has oversight, as provided by the College either electronically or in paper format.
3. Approve draft examination papers, including resit papers, at the time required by the College
4. Approve any alternative assessment arrangements, including those for students with additional needs
5. Sample an agreed range of student work to make judgments on academic standards and the quality of students' learning opportunities, normally using the electronic HELIOS system, with technical support provided by the College
6. Attend the meeting(s) of the relevant Board of Examiners and participate fully in the proceedings of the Board
7. Provide an annual report to the timescale set by the College, using the College report proforma
8. At the request of the College offer advice on cases of academic misconduct in accordance with the College regulations.
9. At the request of the College, to comment on proposals for changes to the curriculum or to changes to assessment at module or programme level,
10. At the request of the College to comment on changes to strategies, policies and procedures developed by the College as part of its ongoing enhancement of its arrangements to safeguard its academic standards and enhance the quality of the student learning experience
11. Inform the Research and Policy Administrator, Ms Frith Hooton, of any changes to contact details, including email address and preferred address for correspondence (contact details below)
12. At the request of the College offer advice on appeals and complaints.

## **11. HOW EXTERNAL EXAMINERS EXERCISE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **11.1 Verifying the standard set**

External examiners are asked to:

11.1.1 comment on assessment set, as well as on student achievement and overall academic standards. Where assessment is by examination, draft examination papers (including resit examination papers) are made available to the relevant external examiner for comment. The role of the external examiner is to verify that the questions set are appropriate in standard and in relation to the scope and learning outcomes of the module, and that they are unambiguous and capable of differentiating between levels academic levels of attainment. Draft papers will be sent by post by the College administration. External examiners are asked to complete a form indicating whether and what changes should be made. External examiners will no doubt wish to contact the module coordinator for any paper which the external examiner wishes to discuss.

11.1.2 Where assessment is mainly by coursework, essays, or presentations, external examiners are not asked to comment upon all individual assessment briefs. The standard is set through criteria, issued to students and used by examiners

in assessment design and in marking. External examiners may comment on the clarity of the criteria and the effectiveness of their application. Internal examiners may consult external examiners on a specific assessment brief, typically because a new approach is being considered, or because a problem has been identified – either by the internal or by the external examiner – in the assessment of the module in the past.

## 11.2 Sampling marked work

- 11.2.1 All assessed coursework at Heythrop is submitted electronically and checked through the turnitin plagiarism service. All coursework is available to external examiners electronically through Helios. Guidance and support on the use of HELIOS, and a password for access, will be provided by the IT Services Manager. All use of Heythrop IT systems is subject to the Heythrop Computing regulations, which have an electronic link on the Helios External Examining pages.
- 11.2.2 External examiners are asked to sample, **NOT MODERATE**, marks awarded internally, in order to verify that marking has been consistent and fair, and that the marks given appropriately reflect the achievement of students in relation to the intended learning outcomes and the standard of the award. External examiners need to see a sufficient range and volume of work to do this
- 11.2.3 The proportion of marked work made available to external examiners electronically through Helios may vary, for example depending on the total number of students assessed and the range of marks awarded. In some cases, where the number of students assessed in a module is very small, external examiners may sample all the marked work. Where a sample is identified, it should include work from the top, the middle and the bottom of the range, normally including all work assessed internally as first class/distinction or as a fail. Provided that this is the case, the size of the sample may be negotiated with the relevant external examiner. Where, however, the number of dissertations makes it impractical for the external examiner to see them all, the same guidelines apply as in the case of scripts and essays. With the sample, the external examiner should have access to the examination paper, assessment brief or essay title, the assessment criteria, feedback to the student (in the case of coursework), and a breakdown of marks awarded internally to students who sat the examination or submitted work for assessment in the module.
- 11.2.4 Through the process of sampling, external examiners are in a position to comment upon whether they consider the marks awarded to be unduly harsh or generous, on the spread of marks used, and (in the case of coursework) on the quality of feedback given to students, and its compatibility with the marks awarded. External examiners are invited to comment on these matters in their reports.
- 11.2.5 External examiners should not be asked to adjudicate on cases when internal markers cannot agree on a mark. In a case of serious difference, a third internal examiner should be asked to mark the work.

11.2.6 If an external examiner has seen the work of all students assessed, he or she may advise adjustments to the marks given through remarking of the whole group. Marks for individual pieces of work contained in the sample cannot be changed unless the assessments for the whole group are remarked (since this could advantage or disadvantage the students who happen to be in the sample). If the external examiner considers that the mark awarded to a single student in a sample appears over-harsh or over-generous in comparison with others, he or she may discuss the differences of view with the internal examiner, and an adjustment may be agreed. If there is a wider and more significant difference of view between the internal and external examiners, the relevant Convener and the external examiner may propose one of the following actions:

- to scale all the marks up or down;
- to ask the external examiner to look, with the internal examiner, at a larger sample (appropriate if the external is concerned about lack of consistency);

11.2.7 It is expected that, normally, such adjustments will be agreed with the internal examiner in advance of the final meeting of the Board and reported to the Board if they are substantial. If agreement has not been reached in advance of the Board, the issue should be referred to the Board, to decide on appropriate action.

11.2.8 If adjustments made by agreement are substantial, they should be reported to the Board, as above. Where the over- or under-marking is slight, the external examiner may propose, and the internal examiner may agree, a slight adjustment in the mark awarded to an individual, typically at the pass/fail margin. Minor differences may also result in a recommendation concerning future marking practice.

### 11.3 Oral Examinations

11.3.1 Where an oral examination is held, at least one external examiner shall be invited to attend. As with other forms of assessment, the role of the external examiner is to sample and advise, with regard to the standard of the assessment and the fairness of the process, and not to mark the work.

### 11.4 Attending the Board of Examiners meeting

11.4.1 Taught programmes are normally considered at two Examination Boards – the Undergraduate Board meeting in July (with a resit Board in September) and the Postgraduate Board meeting in October. All external examiners are members of either the Postgraduate or the Undergraduate Board - or both if their appointment includes both undergraduate and postgraduate provision. External examiners share in the remit of the Board, and assist the College in maintaining standards and ensuring that decisions are made fairly, consistently, and within the regulations. There is a separate Examination Board for the University of London International Programme for Theology/Divinity for which Heythrop is the Lead College.

11.4.2 The College will hold a Pre Board meeting for each of the main boards where issues will be discussed and recommendations agreed for presentation to the

Board. External Examiners are not expected to attend this meeting. Cases considered at the meeting may be raised with the external examiner subsequently, and prior to the meeting of the full Board of Examiners.

11.4.3 External examiners are required to attend the meeting of the Board of Examiners. If, exceptionally, circumstances make this impossible, the external examiner should notify the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience in advance, and should also ensure that comments which may affect the decisions of the Board are made available in advance of the meeting via the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience. Except in case of an emergency which renders it impossible to do so, the external examiner should be available for consultation by telephone or e-mail if required, before and immediately after the meeting of the Board

11.4.4 The external examiner shares in the remit of the whole Board of Examiners. The Board must always take the advice of the external examiner very seriously, and must not lightly decide not to accept that advice. Decisions are, however, to be taken collectively by the Board, and not by the external examiner alone. If the Examination Board reaches a decision which is at variance with the views of the external examiner appointed to the programme, the reasons for that decision should be clearly recorded.

11.4.5 External examiners must observe the confidentiality of Board's discussions.

11.4.6 At the meeting of the Board of Examiners, the role of external examiners includes advice on fairness and consistency, within the College regulations but informed by an understanding of practice elsewhere. An external examiner may comment on the College regulations, but may not require the Board to disregard them.

11.4.7 External examiners are asked to confirm their endorsement of module marks by signing the module mark list after sampling the work and before the meeting of the Board of Examiners. At the end of the meeting of the Board of Examiners, external examiners sign a statement confirming that due process has been followed in reaching those decisions.

#### 11.5 Responsibilities in respect of resit assessment

11.5.1 A student who has failed an assessment task without mitigating circumstances at the first attempt will normally be given an opportunity to undertake repeat assessment or resit examinations to retrieve the failure, for a capped mark. The Examination Board has a responsibility to ensure that the standard required to pass resit assessment is the same as that required to pass initial assessment. The time available for internal and external moderation of resit assessment, before the start of the next academic year, is often very limited. When requiring repeat or resit assessment, the Board may specify whether external examiners must be involved, having regard to the following norms:

- If the Board of Examiners has required a student to resit an examination or repeat an assessment task in order to qualify for an award, one or more external examiner(s) must normally sample the work submitted and be consulted on the award to be conferred. In such a case, the Board might

delegate the decision to the Chair of the Board and the Programme Convenor, in consultation with one or more external examiner(s).

- If the Board requires a student with an otherwise sound profile of marks to resit a single module before progression to the next academic year, consultation with an external examiner will not normally be required.
- If a student is required to resit several modules, following serious failure, the Board may determine that an external examiner should see the resit work.

#### 11.5.2 Mitigating circumstances

11.5.2.1 Students who present an application for mitigating circumstances at any stage during the academic year prior to the Board of Examiners' meeting will be considered by the Exemptions Committee, and a recommendation will be made to the Board of Examiners. External examiners may be consulted as part of this process.

11.5.2.2 Students who make a mitigating circumstances claim after the Board of Examiners' meeting will be considered through the Appeals procedure.

11.5.2.3 A link to the College procedures for dealing with Mitigating Circumstances and appeals can be found on the External Examiners' Helios pages.

#### 11.6 Providing an annual report

11.6.1 External examiners should submit the report electronically, using the report template provided, within three weeks of the Examination Board. The report is essential, and payment cannot be made without it. If an external examiner is persistently unable to present a report, his or her appointment will be terminated.

11.6.2 The report should be sent to the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience, who receives reports on behalf of the Principal. A copy of the report template is available to download on the Helios External Examiners' pages.

11.6.3 External examiners are asked to comment on standards and on the conduct of assessment, and also comment upon aspects of the course structure and choice of assessment styles, on examples of good practice and suggestions for further development.

11.6.4 The report should not refer to individual students or Heythrop staff by name.

11.6.5 External examiners for the University's International Academy programmes follow the International Academy process and use their required template. A copy of the report is made available to the College by the University.

#### 11.7 Consultation on proposed modifications to assessment

11.7.1 External examiners may be asked to approve any proposed changes to assessment regulations or changes to assessment within an individual programme or module which will affect students currently on a programme.

#### 11.8 Consultation on proposed new programmes or changes to existing programmes

External examiners may be asked to comment on the above as part of the development process, but will not be asked to participate in formal approval or review events

#### 11.9 Consultation on strategies and processes

From time to time the College may consult external examiners on developments to strategies, policies and procedures, as part of our commitment to externality in our enhancement activities.

### 12. **HOW THE COLLEGE USES REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

12.1 The Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience will respond to the external examiner concerning issues of academic standards and quality assurance. Programme or subject convenors will respond to subject specific issues if required.

12.2 The Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience circulates reports and her response to the following:

- the Vice Principal (Academic),
- the Director of Administration,
- the Director of Learning and Teaching,
- the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or Dean of Postgraduate Studies as applicable,
- the Head of the Department with responsibility for the programme or subject area,
- The Heythrop Students' Union co-presidents
- ,
- the Programme or subject convenor
- the Chair of the Examination Board.

12.3 The Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience prepares a summary of matters raised in the reports and an action plan arising from them, for consideration by Departmental Boards, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee and the Academic Board. The summary report and action plan will be sent to external examiners.

12.4 External examiners' reports are used as evidence for the programme annual monitoring process, including informing action plans arising from monitoring, both in terms of acting on suggestions made and also in terms of extending or building upon good practice which has been commended.

12.5 External examiners' reports are provided to student representatives for undergraduate provision and reports are made available to all students via the Helios programme page.

12.6 The College provides an Annual Report to the Vice Chancellor of the University of London (in accordance with the University's Ordinance 14), which may include a summary of the number of reports received from external examiners, how they have been considered, a summary of significant issues raised, and actions taken in response. The annual report to the Vice Chancellor is, by the University's Ordinance, also available to any other College of the University.

For details of the process see the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook, via the link on the External Examiners' pages on Helios.

- 12.7 External examiners' reports are among the sources used in Periodic Programme Reviews, during which student panel members will have access to external examiners' reports as part of the evidence for these events. For details of the process see the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook, via the link on the External Examiners' pages on Helios.
- 12.8 External examiners' reports are also provided to panels for Departmental Reviews of academic departments.
- 12.9 External examiners' reports will be provided as evidence in external engagements such as institutional reviews undertaken by the QAA.
- 12.10 A newly appointed external examiner to an existing programme or subject area will receive a copy of the last report produced by their predecessor, plus the overview report and action plan from the previous academic year.

### **13. HEYTHROP COLLEGE'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO ITS EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

- 13.1 To support the external examiner in carrying out their duties, the College will:
  1. Appoint those individuals as external examiners with appropriate skills to carry out the role, or support those with no previous experience by providing a mentor and other support
  2. Provide opportunities for induction and annual updating for all external examiners
  3. Provide clear contact details for the academic lead for the provision to be examined, and for administrative contacts associated with the provision and supporting systems
  4. Provide information electronically and, if required, in paper format, on the academic provision covered by the external examiner's appointment, and on the policies and procedures relating to assessment and external examining
  5. Provide web based information and resources for external examiners to assist examiners carry out their duties
  6. Notify external examiners in a timely fashion of any changes to relevant policies, procedures etc which have an impact on their duties
  7. Provide an annual timetable of activities for external examiners, including the dates of meetings of the Board of Examiners, early in the academic year so that dates of examination boards are known and travel plans can be made
  8. Provide timely access to an agreed sample of student work, normally electronically through the HELIOS system, with appropriate technical support

9. On receipt of the annual report, pay the fee and expenses in a timely manner
10. Provide a timely response to the annual report, both from the perspective of the academic subject, and from a quality and standards perspective, with an indication of the actions to be taken to address issues raised by the examiner
11. Provide a copy of the annual overview reports and actions plans which are considered by the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee and the Academic Board, to confirm how generic issues raised by external examiners are taken forward

#### **14. TERMINATION OF THE CONTRACT**

- 14.1 The external examiner's contract is normally for four years, in the first instance, with the possibility of a mutually agreed extension for a fifth and final year.
- 14.2 The College understands that there will be circumstances where it will not be possible for the full term of office to be served, for example if an external examiner significantly changes their other duties so that they cannot continue with the workload, or where an examiner changes their place of employment and can no longer attend meetings of the Board of Examiners at the College. In these circumstances the external examiner is asked to notify the College as the earliest possible opportunity if they decide that they cannot continue with their appointment.
- 14.3 The College hopes that its dealings with all external examiners will be fruitful and positive for both parties. However, it reserves the right to terminate any appointment, if, after a discussion, or attempts to hold a discussion, with the examiner concerned, it becomes clear to the College that the examiner in post is unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties associated with that post to the appropriate standard and/or to the required timescale.

#### **15. THE ANNUAL REPORT FORM**

- 15.1 This should be returned electronically to the Director of Administration (contact details below), within **THREE WEEKS** of the meeting of the Board of Examiners. Please submit this electronically. An electronic template can be downloaded from the Heythrop External Examiners' Helios pages..

#### **16. CLAIMING FEES AND EXPENSES**

- 16.1 A form for claiming expenses, and a form for recording work undertaken, is available to download from the External Examiners' Helios page.. Please read the guidance notes when completing the form. When you claim expenses, it is essential to provide receipts to support them. Expense forms should be returned to the Director of Administration.

**17. STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ASSESSMENT**

17.1 External Examiners may wish to contact the following in the course of their duties:

**The Principal:**

**Professor Claire Ozanne:**

Should you wish to contact the Principal on any matters, please do so via:

Principal's Office: **Ms Annabel Clarkson**

Email: [a.clarkson@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:a.clarkson@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4203

**The Vice Principal (Academic):**

**Dr Peter Gallagher**

He has responsibility for academic matters within the College and is also available should you wish to contact him on any matters, and especially if you wish to raise any serious concerns in confidence.

Email: [p.gallagher@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:p.gallagher@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial number 020 7795 4208

**Director of Learning and Teaching:**

**Dr Jon Loose**

As Director of Learning and Teaching he is Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee. He is responsible for ensuring that issues raised by external examiners are considered fully and actions taken as agreed by the College.

Email: [j.loose@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:j.loose@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4266

**Dean of Undergraduate Studies:**

**Dr Sean Ryan**

Dr Ryan has oversight of undergraduate programmes and student matters

Email: [s.ryan@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:s.ryan@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 6600

**Dean of Postgraduate Studies:**

**Dr Edward Howells**

Dr Howells has oversight of taught postgraduate programmes and student matters.

Email: [e.howells@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:e.howells@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4217

**Head of the Department of Philosophy**

**Dr Stephen Law**

Email: [s.law@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:s.law@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4222

**Head of the Department of Theology**

**Dr Martin Poulson**

Email: [m.poulson@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:m.poulson@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4236

**Your programme convenor:**

Is responsible for providing information on the academic provision to be examined, and will respond to any academic queries or issues of concern which you raise. Contact details are available on the College website.

**Your subject convenor:**

If you are acting as a subject examiner at undergraduate level you will liaise with a named member of staff who has responsibility for that subject area. Contact details are available on the College website.

**Director of Administration**

**Mr Saladin Rospigliosi** has responsibility for assessment arrangements and the operation of the Boards of Examiners. Annual reports and claim forms should be submitted to him.

Email: [s.rospigliosi@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:s.rospigliosi@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4269

**Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience:**

**Ms Kathryn Powell** provides a response to your report from the quality assurance and enhancement perspective and the provision of an overview report each year highlighting good practice and areas for development. She produces an action plan on generic issues raised by external examiners. You are also welcome to contact Kathryn if you have any queries or concerns about any aspect of your role or the assessment processes of the College.

Email: [k.powell@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:k.powell@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4164

**IT Support:**

**Mr Nadeem Ahmad**, Head of ICT Services, can advise on access to and use of HELIOS and provide your access codes.

Email: [n.ahmad@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:n.ahmad@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4243

Mobile: 07775 408816

**Programme administration:**

**Ms Mariann Jakab, Student Administrator**

Email: [m.jakab@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:m.jakab@heythrop.ac.uk)

Direct dial: 020 7795 4201

**Chairs of Boards of Examiners:**

General queries regarding Boards of Examiners should be directed in the first instance to the **Director of Administration**. See above for contact details.

**Academic Misconduct issues:**

The College regards poor academic conduct by students as a serious matter. The policy can be found on the External Examiner Helios pages and is available in hard copy from the **Director of Administration**. Possible cases are considered in the first instance by the relevant Dean.

**18. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:**

- 18.1 The main source of information for external examiners are the External Examiners' pages on Helios on the College VLE. Information includes:
- Electronic copy of the External Examiners' Handbook
  - Links to College strategies and policies
  - The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook,
  - The Credit and Assessment Framework,
  - Academic Regulations
  - Academic Misconduct procedures,
  - Board of Examiners procedures
  - Overview reports of issues from previous years and reports on actions taken
  - A link to the QAA Quality Code with especial reference to Chapter B7 External Examining
  - Annual report form template
  - Claim forms templates
  - Programme specifications and module outlines

To use the Helios pages you will require a log in and password, available from the Head of ICT Services, who can provide technical advice on accessing and navigating your way around Helios. See contact details above.

- 18.2 The College website [www.heythrop.ac.uk](http://www.heythrop.ac.uk) for information on the College, including staff contact details.

## 19. ANNUAL TIMESCALES FOR THE EXTERNAL EXAMINING PROCESS SEPTEMBER 2017 – DECEMBER 2018

### 19.1 KEY DATES

Monday 11 September 2017	Undergraduate Reassessment Pre-Examination Board 2016/17 (internal examiners)
Thursday 14 September 2017	Undergraduate Reassessment Board 2016/17 (internal and external examiners)
Thursday 12 October 2017	Postgraduate Pre-Examination Board 2016/17 (internal examiners)
Wednesday 18 October 2017	Postgraduate Examination Board 2016/17 (internal and external examiners)
Thursday 7 June 2018	Postgraduate Pre-Examination Board 2017/18 (internal examiners only)
Tuesday 12 June 2018	Postgraduate Examination Board 2017/18 (internal and external examiners)
Tuesday 3 July 2018	Undergraduate Pre-Examination Board 2017/18 (internal examiners only)
Tuesday 10 July 2018	Undergraduate Award Board 2017/18 (internal and external examiners)
Monday 10 September 2018 To Thursday 20 September 2018	Undergraduate and Postgraduate outcomes for students with August 2018 deferrals or resubmissions determined through Chair's actions (external examiner involvement via email)

### 19.2 Michaelmas Term 2017: All examiners:

External Examiners' Briefing material available on Helios

Updated information supplied to all examiners if significant changes to procedures etc have been introduced

#### For UG provision

Consideration of overview of issues from UG external examiners by Departmental Boards, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee and Academic Board

Action plans agreed to address issues raised by UG External examiners

Overview report and action plan sent to undergraduate external examiners by the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience and posted on External Examiners' pages on Helios and made available to students

Update to Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee of actions taken to address points made by external examiners in previous academic years.

For PG examiners:

Meeting of MA Board of Examiners with prior consideration of samples of work and discussion of cases. Possible follow up activities after the Board (see key dates)

Submission of Annual Report and expenses claims no later than three weeks after the meeting of the MA Board of Examiners

Response to external examiners from the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience and Programme Convenor. Reports circulated to relevant staff and made available to students. Included in Annual Programmes Review Reports.

Lent Term

Consideration of overview of issues from PG external examiners by Departmental Boards and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee with a report and action plan to Academic Board, and action plan agreed

Overview report and action plan sent to PG external examiners by the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience and made available to staff and students via Helios

Update to Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee of actions taken to address points made by external examiners in previous academic years.

UG Examiners:

Consideration of draft examination papers for the main examination period and resit papers and any requests for alternative assessment arrangements

Summer Term

UG examiners:

Information on the assessment process issued along with access to samples of work. Consultation undertaken with academic and administrative staff

Boards of Examiners meetings held for UG provision (see key dates)

Annual reports and expenses claims to be submitted no later

than three weeks after the meeting of the Board of Examiners

Response to external examiners from the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience and Programme convenor. Reports circulated to relevant staff and made available to students. Included in Annual Programmes Review Reports.

Update to Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee of actions taken to address points made by external examiners in previous academic years.

For PG examiners:

Meeting of MA Board of Examiners with prior consideration of samples of work and discussion of cases. Possible follow up activities after the Board (see key dates)

Submission of Annual Report and expenses claims no later than three weeks after the meeting of the MA Board of Examiners

Response to external examiners from the Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience and Programme Convenor. Reports circulated to relevant staff and made available to students. Included in Annual Programmes Review Reports.

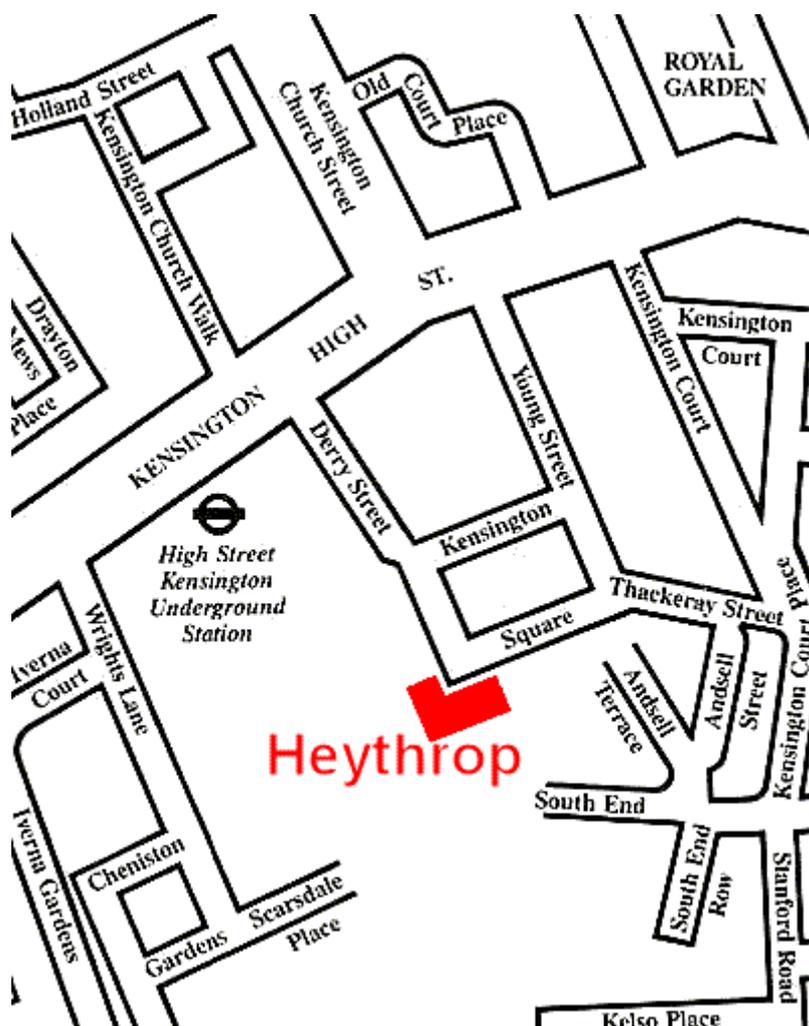
## 21 ENHANCING COLLEGE PROCESSES

21.1 To help the College in its aim of continual improvement of its processes, we welcome any feedback from external examiners on their experience, any suggestions to improve processes or the information supplied to external examiners, including the contents of this Handbook, or any other observations which will help us to improve our interactions with our external examiners. These can be included within the Annual Report or sent at any time to:

Kathryn Powell  
Director of Academic Policy and Student Experience  
Heythrop College  
University of London  
Kensington Square  
London  
W8 5HN

Or by email: [k.powell@heythrop.ac.uk](mailto:k.powell@heythrop.ac.uk)

## 22 Directions to Heythrop College



### Tube:

Heythrop is close to High Street Kensington Underground Station, on the Circle Line.

### Bus routes:

It is also on bus routes 9, 10, 27, 28, 49 52 and 328.

### Car:

As almost anywhere in Central London, parking facilities are very limited: if it is essential for you to bring a car, please let us know in advance so that a parking space can be arranged.