**External Examiner / Verifier and EQA Protocols**

**Introduction**

Programmes delivered at the CECOS College London are all subject to external examining, verifying and External Quality Assurance (EQA), either as part of the partner college arrangements or under the quality assurance process operated for programmes by ATHE, City and Guilds, NCFE, OTHM, TQUK, Pearson and other awarding bodies along with those of partner universities.

**External regulatory authorities**

The College operates its quality assurance protocols taking account of the requirements of the Regulatory Qualifications Framework (RQF) and the UK Quality Code for Higher Educationadvice and guidance including the themes of:

* Assessment
* Enabling Student Achievement
* Student Engagement
* External Expertise
* Partnerships

**Aims and objectives**

The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that the College maintains a consistent approach towards external quality assurance and meets the requirements of its partners and awarding bodies/organisations. This includes making appropriate arrangements for external examiner/verifier and EQA visits along with partner institution monitoring visits; providing appropriate assessment samples; responding to external examiners/verifiers and EQAs after their visits and ensuring that recommendations and requirements in external reports are considered and followed up at a senior level in the College to ensure areas for development are actioned and standards maintained.

**Defined responsibilities**

Programme/Course Managers are responsible for ensuring that external examiner/verifier/EQA visits proceed smoothly and that all appropriate materials are provided. The Head of Programme will ensure that examination/progression boards are held. The Director of Quality will also ensure that external examiner/verifier/EQA reports are considered at cross-college level, with key outcomes reported to the Quality Management Group, and that any recommendations or requirements are followed up or actioned appropriately.

**Operational description**

**Arranging external examiner/verifier/EQA visits**

Programme/Course Managers should liaise with the external examiner/verifier/EQA about the details of the planned visit and ensure that the details of the visit carefully arranged so as to meet the requirements of the external and also to minimise any undue disruption to the work of the programme/course team. The following should be provided for all external quality assurance visits:

* a note for the team giving details of the external`s programme, approximate timings and any special requirements
* appropriate communications to ensure students are be alerted to the possibility of a meeting with the external
* a sample of assignment briefs and a sample of assessed student work (the size and nature of the samples to be discussed with the external)
* internal verification/moderation records relating to the programme
* other programme documentation to be available (e.g. programme specification; programme handbook)

**Supporting the external examiner/verifier/EQA during the visit**

Programme/Course Managers should ensure that all externals are welcomed on arrival at the College and that their work is facilitated by the provision of all appropriate materials and a quiet area in which to work. Programme/Course Managers should respond appropriately to requests from externals for additional samples, meetings with students or discussions with programme staff. Where visits are undertaken virtually, access to appropriate materials must be checked and monitored to allow appropriate access.

Programme/Course Managers should try to ensure that all external visits are completed in an appropriate fashion and that any problems arising from the visit are brought to the attention of the Head of Programme and/or the Director of Quality, if necessary, while the external is still on site.

**Examination Boards and external examiners**

Exam/Progression Boards are held each term to review student progress and to agree results. In all cases where there are Turnitin scores of 15% or above, the score is investigated. The decision of the Exam/Progression Board is final and students are notified if any plagiarism and academic misconduct action is to be taken. Staff also attend partner university Exam Boards and comply with university procedures and regulations.

External reports are considered at Programme/Course Boards and at Academic Board and action plans are developed and monitored by Programme/Course Managers and the Head of Provision.

**Consideration of external examiner/verifier/EQA requirements and recommendations**

External examiner reports will initially be considered at programme level and the Head of HE and the Director of Quality will review all reports across different programmes, ensuring that all issues raised are considered at a strategic level. Summarised external examiner comments will also be included in the process of programme and annual review.

The Programme Managers will also ensure that student representatives are made aware of the content of external examiner/verifier/EQA reports and the actions to be taken by the College as a result of these reports.

**Responding to external examiners**

The Head of Programme or Programme/Course Manager will respond to all external examiners/verifiers/EQAs after receiving their reports to thank them for the visit and to indicate the actions that will be taken as a result of any recommendations. Curriculum Managers are responsible for taking forward the recommendations and reporting progress.