



External Examiner Information Pack  
Finalised September 2024

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## Welcome

Thank you for your support as an External Examiner.

This guide is designed to provide details of the External Examiner life cycle, institutional information and, useful links to support you. Please familiarise yourself with the details included. Appendix A is contextual information that helps direct the University in duties requested of External Examiners.

You should receive the link to this guide from the relevant School Support Service (S3) staff in a communication from them that also included the items below. If you have not received this, please contact the relevant School Operations Manager.<sup>1</sup> Thank you.

Communication to newly appointed External Examiner sent by school:

- Log in details and instructions for Moodle
- Programme Administrator contact details
- Extract from Key Dates calendar that highlights the window that Programme Assessment Board meetings can be held within
- Indication of who will be in contact with Programme Assessment Board invitation and when.
- Link to Academic Regulations
- Approved exemptions to the University Regulations (if applicable)
- My Programme (through programme Moodle link)
- Module record from CME
- Provision record from CME including recommended sequence



## Appointment

As you are in receipt of this guide your appointment is confirmed and you are ready to begin your duties. Your contract is managed by the School Support Service. If you have any queries, please contact the person who sent you the link to this guide or your School Operations Manager who can redirect your query.

Appendix B provides a Glossary of frequently used terms you will encounter through your engagement with assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> The School Operations Managers are [o.dellal@napier.ac.uk](mailto:o.dellal@napier.ac.uk) for Applied Sciences and for Health & Social Care; [s.hall2@napier.ac.uk](mailto:s.hall2@napier.ac.uk) for Arts & Creative Industries; [l.bews@napier.ac.uk](mailto:l.bews@napier.ac.uk) for Computing & Engineering or [v.harte@napier.ac.uk](mailto:v.harte@napier.ac.uk) for the Business School.

## Key contact points & indicative timescales



The first thing we ask is that you please check your Moodle access. Moodle is our virtual learning environment and one of the ways that you will be able to access information needed to conduct your duties. An assessment brief including assessment criteria, submission details, learning outcomes covered, component weighting should be made available via the Module Moodle site to all students. Online submission of assessments via Moodle is the standard School process.

All assessments require moderation, and you should ensure that this is completed **before** publication to students. Level 7 & 8 modules require Internal Moderation (*there are some exceptions to this depending on professional body requirements*). Levels 9 -11 modules require both Internal and External moderation. Information on the module external examiners is available from the S3 Quality and Accreditation Team.

The University Academic Regulations (A.2) requires that the information on assessment is clear, accurate, consistent, and accessible. To assist with this, you are given access to assessment briefs, marking criteria, assessment questions and sample of student work for provision you externally examine for. There is more detail on this in the *Pre-Moderation Assessments* and *Post-Moderation Assessments* sections below. In both instances the information is provided electronically to maximise the opportunity to review and provide feedback to Module Leaders.

If you are a Programme External Examiner you will be sent an outlook calendar invitation to attend the Programme Assessment Boards. These Boards run four times a year; one at the end of each Trimester and one after the compulsory reassessment diet. Our Academic Calendar is available [here](#). We aim to send invitations to these Boards by the December for the session. Please note that External Examiners contracted to examine modules only are not invited to the Programme Assessment Boards.

Each year you will be asked to provide a report to the University which reflects on the provision you have been responsible for during the academic year. The timing of this differs depending on whether you are the external examiner for undergraduate (early June) or postgraduate (early September). You will receive the report to complete from School Support Service. Please note that submission of the report is the act that triggers payment for duties undertaken.



## Moodle Access

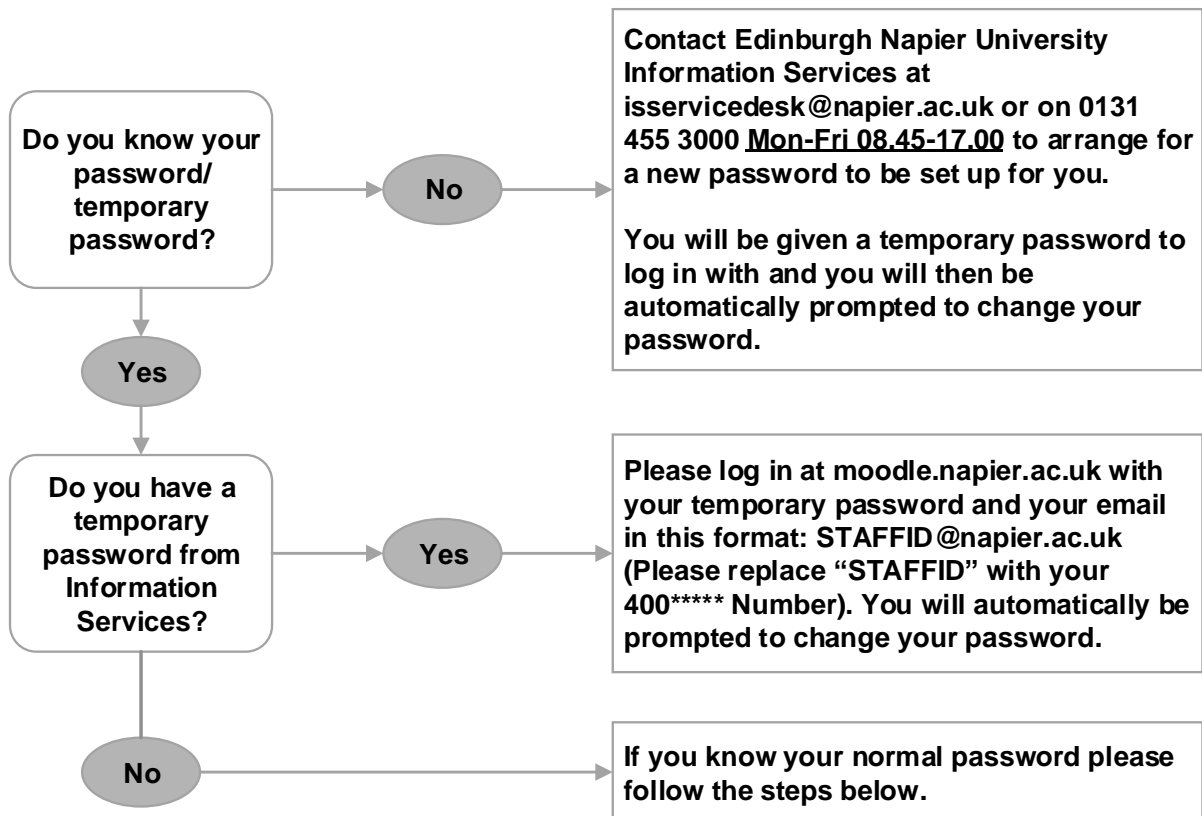
For most External Examiners Moodle is the primary source of information needed to conduct duties. It is vital that you **please log on to your Edinburgh Napier University Moodle Account to check your access**. Please ensure you are not trying to access Moodle through your own University system. To ensure you are not doing this, **please open a new web browser page or a private browsing page**.

If you are experiencing any difficulty accessing your account, please refer to the

below **Moodle Access Troubleshooting Guide**. Please note that it is possible that your School use a platform other than Moodle to share information with you (e.g. SharePoint).



### Moodle Access Troubleshooting Guide



**Please change your password at [Mypassword.napier.ac.uk](https://moodle.napier.ac.uk). Please see our changing your password guide below to assist you with this process.**

**Please log in at [moodle.napier.ac.uk](https://moodle.napier.ac.uk) with your new password and your email in this format:**

**STAFFID@napier.ac.uk (Please replace “STAFFID” with your 400\*\*\*\*\* Number)**

**If you are not successful logging into your Moodle Account via the above method, please try to log in at [moodle.napier.ac.uk](https://moodle.napier.ac.uk) using your new password and your email in this format:**

**STAFFID@livenapierac.onmicrosoft.com (Please replace “STAFFID” with your 400\*\*\*\*\* Number)**

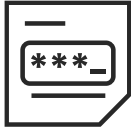
**If you are still unable to log in please go to:**

**<https://moodle.napier.ac.uk/login/index.php?saml=false>**

**Log in with your 400\*\*\*\*\* number (only the number, not your email address) and your new password.**

**This URL bypasses the need for an email-based username.**

**If you are still unable to log into your Moodle Account please contact our Information Services Team at [isservicedesk@napier.ac.uk](mailto:isservicedesk@napier.ac.uk) or 0131 455 3000 to discuss your case individually. (Please contact the team Mon-Fri 08.45-17.00)**



## Changing your password

Go to [Mypassword.napier.ac.uk](https://mypassword.napier.ac.uk) and choose the option to “Change My password” under “I know my password but want to change it”

Log in to the Microsoft page using this email format: **STAFFID@napier.ac.uk** (Please replace “STAFFID” with your 400\*\*\*\* Number)

Put in your password or temporary password and follow the steps to change your password

Please note that your new password:

- Must contain at least 15 characters
- Must not be the same as any of the previous passwords used for your University account, or any other account belonging to you
- Must not contain your name or Edinburgh Napier number
- Must not contain words such as “Napier” or “password”
- May include passphrases (sequences of words) and PINs (sequences of numbers)
- May contain lowercase letters, uppercase letters, numbers and symbols (including spaces)

If you are still experiencing access issues only the University Information Services can assist. Please contact them at [informationservices@napier.ac.uk](mailto:informationservices@napier.ac.uk)



## External Examiner Engagement with Assessments

To enable you to conduct your duties with respect engagement with assessments the following information will be made available to you - assessment brief, assessment criteria, marking scheme, assessments set and a square root sample of internally moderated assessments at SCQF levels 9, 10 and 11. In some schools this material is collectively referred to as a “module pack”.

Most interactions will be electronic. In a circumstance where you are required to attend the University to engage with the assessment your S3 contact will provide the paperwork needed to receive expenses incurred.



## Pre-Moderation Assessments

The University seeks to ensure External Examiners receive documentation in a user friendly and timely manner with reasonable opportunity to respond to queries and make comments.

Once assessments have been set you will be asked to comment on those that count towards awards of the University for the provision allocated to you. You will be asked to comment on the appropriateness of assessment. We usually seek to liaise with you on assessments set prior to students receiving the assessment. The information is often provided on Moodle but other platforms might be used e.g SharePoint. If you have any problems accessing the module you need to moderate, or if you can't find the External Examiner section, please contact the person who gave you the link to this guide so that they can request that you are given access. (Please note that this access will take 24 hours to become live as soon as it is requested).

The University [Marking and Internal Moderation Practice Guidance](#) includes a section on what to consider when pre-moderating assessment instruments:

- Does the assessment appropriately cover the learning outcomes being assessed?
- Does the assessment give accurate, clear instructions/guidance to the student?
- Does the assessment provide clear and appropriate assessment criteria for marking?
- Are there sufficient opportunities for students to demonstrate critical thought (to an appropriate level)?
- Are any additional materials/supplies that are needed to complete the assessment indicated?
- Is the level of work and effort needed as indicated in the module descriptor?
- Have the assessment question(s) been used previously?
- Is the format and presentation of the assessment of an appropriate standard?
- Is there any good practice you think should be more widely disseminated?"



## Post-Moderation Assessments

After submitted assessments have been marked and internally moderated you will be asked to review a sample of student work. If you have any problems accessing the module you need to moderate on Moodle, or if you can't find the External Examiner section, please contact the person who sent you this guide. They will request that you are given access. (Please note that this access will take 24 hours to become live as soon as it is requested).

The University requires that for post assessment moderation a minimum square root sample must be reviewed. There is a suggested University Post-moderation Record



Template available for Module Leader, Internal Moderator and then External Examiner to complete. Please note, however, that this University template can be revised slightly by Schools- for example where there are professional body requirements to be considered.

The University [Marking and Internal Moderation Practice Guidance](#) in section on what to consider when moderating students work-

- Is there a clear indication of the marks/ grades assignment to the students' work?
- Have the assessment criteria been applied consistently and fairly?
- Has all of the students' work been marked?
- Any errors in the summation of the marks (particularly pertinent to exams)?
- Are the marks/ grades consistent with the comments provided?
- Is the feedback useful to the students to help them to improve?
- Does the feedback clearly indicate to the students where they have done well?
- Is there any good practice<sup>2</sup> you think should be more widely disseminated?



### Programme Assessment Boards

If you are a Programme External Examiner participation and attendance at Programme Assessment Boards is an important aspect of your duties. Please note that if you have been appointed to externally examine on modules only you are not required to attend Programme Assessment Boards. All Boards are conducted online not in person.

### Prior to Programme Assessment Board

You will receive an Outlook calendar invitation to attend Programme Boards for programmes in which you are attached.

Prior to the Programme Assessment Board, you will receive a secure link to board papers (sometimes referred to as student transcripts) for you to review. These papers are accessible through SharePoint and to gain access, you must log in using your @livenapierac.onmicrosoft.com Limited Associate account.

It is possible that for the External Examiner host institution email address to be associated with the Limited Associate account, but the login will remain a separate entity to securely access Edinburgh Napier's SharePoint infrastructure. In December 2023, IS (Networks & Security team) were investigating access for externals using other trusted institution logins but until this results in a change of practice, please use the Napier provided credentials (i.e @livenapierac.onmicrosoft.com) to access SharePoint.

If you encounter issues accessing SharePoint using your login credentials as above, please email [ISServiceDesk@napier.ac.uk](mailto:ISServiceDesk@napier.ac.uk) and copy in the administrator who sent you the link as soon as possible so this can be resolved prior to the Board.

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<sup>2</sup> Good practice is a relative construct, but here refers to practice which is deemed worthy of sharing beyond the immediate academic team

## At the Programme Assessment Board

At the Programme Assessment Board, you will be introduced at the start of the meeting. Once the review of Board Papers concludes, you will be invited by the Convenor to provide comment on the overall performance of the programme(s) discussed. Decisions on student performance, progression and awards are taken by the Board as a whole.

## After Programme Assessment Board

Attending Programme Assessment Boards is a critical part of the External Examiner role. In exceptional cases, it is appreciated that an External Examiner may not be able to attend or participate in the Programme Assessment Board meeting. If so, it is expected that you have access to required Board information prior to the meeting taking place to enable you to submit your comments on overall quality/standards and any specific student issues in advance of the meeting.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you will be asked to confirm in writing that you have been involved in the assessment process and agree with the decisions made at the Board.



### Annual Report

Each External Examiner submits an annual report at the end of each academic year. It is extremely important that the report is completed as it is your opportunity to provide both positive and constructive feedback to support the continual enhancement of our programmes and processes.

A template report will be sent to you directly, with a request to complete and return the report by a given deadline. Generally, you can expect to receive the report template;

- Early June for UG responsibilities
- Early September for PG or those with UG and TPG responsibilities



### Payment

The details of your fee are detailed on your appointment letter.

Payment is triggered once the deadline has passed, only if your annual report has been completed and submitted. Once the report has been submitted, payroll will be informed. If the report is submitted before the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month then payment will be processed and made on the 28<sup>th</sup> of the same month. For submissions made after the 6<sup>th</sup>, payment will be processed and made on the 28<sup>th</sup>

of the following month.

**Payments will only be processed once the annual report has been submitted.**

Context to the requirements asked of External Examiners with respect their engagement with assessments, sampling student work and Programme Assessment Boards.

Table 1: Extracts from institutional policies and regulations

<p><b>Information Source - <a href="#">January 2024 Assessment Policy</a> explains that:</b></p>
<p>P 12- “7.3 Pre assessment moderation via external examiner External examiners may provide pre assessment moderation and approval specifically</p> <p>for assessments at SCQF Level 9 and above. Ideally external examiner moderation and scrutiny must take place for all assessments especially when a new assessment is running for the first time or where Schools/programmes want to seek guidance on</p> <p>common practices with a new type of assessment that is being used.”</p>
<p>P16 7.5.2 continued “External examiners should receive all documentation that is to be reviewed in a user friendly and timely manner. They should be given reasonable opportunity to respond to queries and make comments as they see fit on the documents under review. “</p>
<p>Appendix D is a Post-moderation Record Template with completers being section 1 – ML, 2, internal moderator and 3 the EE.</p>
<p><b>Information Source - <a href="#">Marking and Internal Moderation Practice Guidance</a> explains that:</b></p>
<p>2.3 p 3 “<b>Internal Moderation of Assessment Instruments:</b> Carried out to ensure that assessments are well designed and fit for the purpose of assessing the learning outcomes of the module concerned.”</p>
<p>P 5 internal moderation of assessment to be done before issue to/ feedback from EE.</p>
<p>P7 &amp; 8 give prompts to consider when pre-moderating assessments and moderating students work.</p>
<p><b>Information Source - <a href="#">University Academic Regulations 2023/24</a> require that:</b></p>
<p>A.2 “ ... Information on assessment is clear, accurate, consistent and accessible to all staff, students and external examiners. ...”</p>
<p>Section A 10.1 An external examiner will be <b>appointed to report and comment on all assessments which count towards the awards of the University listed in Regulation A4.1a), b), c) and f). To achieve this all approved SCQF level 9, 10 and 11 modules</b> and all approved programmes of study which lead to an award of the University listed in Regulation A4.1a), b), c) or f) will be allocated to an external examiner. Programme external examiners are required to consider and support exit awards.</p>
<p>A10.3 “As a minimum, external examiners are asked to review a square root sample of completed assessment assignments and comment on: a) whether the academic standard of each module or programme of study being considered is set and maintained at the appropriate level b) whether the standards of student performance are properly judged against the level set c) whether the</p>

assessment process is appropriate, rigorous, equitable and conducted in accordance with University guidance d) the comparability of the standard and level of student achievement with those in other higher education institutions.”

A10.4 “If an external examiner is unable to attend a meeting of a Programme Assessment Board, their views must be communicated to the Convenor of the Board prior to the meeting and such views will inform the meeting appropriately. Section A 2023-24 Page A27 of 33 The formal written minute of a Programme Assessment Board must record the views submitted by the approved external examiner and the means by which appropriate account has been given to such views. In the event that an external examiner declines or is unable to submit their views prior to the meeting, this must be recorded in the formal written minute.”

Says that if, for exceptional circumstances, the external examiner is not able to attend the meeting, they should confirm in writing that they have been involved in the assessment process and that they agree with the decisions made at the Programme Assessment Board.



## Appendix B

Information Source - [January 2024 Assessment Policy](#) explains that:

**Assessment marking criteria** - informed by (and linked to) the learning outcomes clearly indicating what is expected from a student and set out the reasoning to be used in making a judgement on how well a student has performed in the assessment. The assessment marking criteria should be shared and explained to students at the start of their modules and/or at a time prior to students undertaking the assessment. Marking criteria must be shared with external examiners.

P20 Glossary says “Assessment criteria: Criteria are used to mark or grade each assessment task. They clearly define the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student is expected to display based on the intended module/programme learning outcomes for the work being assessed.”

**Assessment Brief** – created for every summative coursework assessment. The assessment brief should be made available to students as early as possible to provide them with maximum time to prepare their assessment task. The Assessment policy also gives information on what the brief must include.

P22 Glossary **Moderation**: refers to the checks that take place internally (see internal moderation) and externally (see external moderation) to ensure assessment is appropriate, valid, reliable, consistently marked and is at the expected level of education being taught. Moderation differs from second marking because it involves the scrutiny of samples of assessed work across a range of marks to ensure reliability. Moderation also provides feedback to the markers rather than to learners.