

## Regulations for Boards of Examiners

Version	Update and Reason	Author and Title	Date of LTAC Approval	Effective Date	Review date
1.0	Amend the training requirements for examiners (excluding External Examiners)	Head of Examinations and Assessments, Academic Quality Manager		June 2023	June 2024

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## **1. Introduction and purpose**

### **1.1 Purpose**

On behalf of Academic Board to exercise the fair and just use of regulations and uphold academic standards in respect of the assessment of students on taught courses.

The Examination for each course shall be conducted by a Board of Examiners. Where a course has more than one Board of Examiners the structure of Boards shall be approved by Academic Board.

### **1.2 Membership**

- I. Chair.
- II. External Examiners.
- III. Course Director and Year Leaders (where appointed).
- IV. All Internal Examiners and Assessors contributing to the assessment of students (except for Assistant Examiners).

In attendance: Secretary (normally an Exams Officer), who has undergone relevant training at RVC, appointed by the Academic Registrar.

### **1.3 Quorum**

- I. Chair.
- II. At least one External Examiner.
- III. Course Director/Year leader (where appointed) or nominated deputy.
- IV. At least 2 RVC Internal Examiners (not including the Course Director/Year Leader) providing all sections of the course are represented.

### **1.4 Terms of Reference**

Within the terms of the programme specification of an individual course and Royal Veterinary College regulations to be responsible for and have authority to deal with:

- I. The approval of the questions and format used in examination papers and other forms of assessment.
- II. The moderation of marking standards and so the approval of the results.
- III. Decisions relating to the progression of students and termination of study.
- IV. Recommendation to Academic Board for the conferral of awards upon individual students.

Consideration of the spread of results and the quality of students' work to report upon:

- V. The nature, appropriateness and conduct of forms of assessment.
- VI. The standards set and the standards achieved.
- VII. The performance of students.

## **1.5 Meetings of Boards of Examiners**

- I. The results of the examination shall be determined by meetings of the Board of Examiners. Such meetings shall have a formal agenda.
- II. All student results will be presented to the board by candidate number to ensure that decisions are made impartially and fairly. At no point during a meeting of the board will students name be disclosed.
- III. No persons other than the members, and administrative staff responsible for examinations shall be permitted to attend meetings of the Board of Examiners.
- IV. Records of the candidates' marks in class tests, formal course work, and practical assessments shall be available for inspection.
- V. The result of the examination shall be determined in accordance with the approved assessment regulations for the course.
- VI. The views of the External Examiners must be influential in the case of disagreement about a particular candidate, but the decision shall be arrived at by a majority vote of the examiners present. The Chairman shall have a casting vote in addition to their own vote.
- VII. A record shall be kept of each meeting of the Board of Examiners at which the results of examinations are determined, and particularly of those cases which required special consideration (not including mitigating circumstances).
- VIII. Any member of the Board of Examiners should normally have no close personal involvement with a candidate. College staff, interns and residents should not take part in the assessment of a candidate with whom they have close personal involvement.

## **2. Chair and Deputy Chair**

### **2.1 Chair**

The Board of Examiners shall have a Chair, appointed by the Academic Board.

A Chair:

- I. is independent of the course i.e., nominee should not hold a role of a curriculum manager for the course or year of the course and ideally should not have been involved in the delivery of teaching and assessment for the course or year of the course to which Board they are being appointed.
- II. is a permanent member of staff at the RVC i.e., nominee cannot be in their probationary period, and should be at the level of a lecturer or above.
- III. has served as Deputy Chair i.e., a nominee would have shadowed the Exam Board Chair as stated in section 2.2 to gain the experience of chairing main and resit exam boards.

- IV. has successfully completed the RVC's training, organised by the Academic Quality team ([ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK](mailto:ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK)) before the appointment can be confirmed.
- V. A nominee should meet any requirements set by any relevant PSRBs and collaborative partner(s) for the programme in question.

Exam Board Chairs are normally appointed for a period of 4 years. The appointment can be renewed after 4 years for a maximum tenure of 8 years.

## **2.2 Deputy Chair**

The Board of Examiners shall have a Deputy Chair appointed by the Academic Board.

A Deputy Chair:

- I. is independent of the course i.e., nominee should not hold a role of a curriculum manager for the course or year of the course and ideally should not have been involved in the delivery of teaching and assessment for the course or year of the course to which Board they are being appointed.
- II. is a permanent member of staff at the RVC i.e., nominee cannot be in their probationary period and should be at the level of a lecturer or above. They do not necessarily need to have previous experience of chairing Exam Boards (this would help widen the pool of candidates for this position).
- III. is gradually appointed to the role by observing the work of the Chair in their 1st year of appointment. In the 2nd and 3rd year of appointment, the Deputy Chair is expected to increase their involvement, by Chairing either the main or resit Exam Board, with support of the Chair. In the 4th year of appointment, the Deputy Chair is expected to Chair both the main Exam Board and resit Exam Board with the Chair shadowing and being available for support.
- IV. During the period of serving as a Deputy Chair, they are expected to have successfully completed the RVC's training, organised by the Academic Quality team ([ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK](mailto:ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK)) before the appointment can be confirmed.
- V. A nominee should meet any requirements set by any relevant PSRBs and collaborative partner(s) for the programme in question.

## **3. Examiners**

### **3.1 Assistant Examiners**

Any new member of RVC staff with 'academic' duties within their role (i.e., could / will be marking something in the future) can become an Assistant Examiner. These individuals include Academic Technical Staff, Staff Veterinary Nurses, Staff Veterinary Surgeons, for example those working at the Beaumont Sainsbury Animal Hospital (BSAH), postgraduate students including interns, residents and those studying for Master's or Doctoral degrees etc. Employees at partner institutions would not qualify for this role.

Assistant Examiners can assist in the marking of scripts and in the conduct and marking of practical components of the examination. Staff members so appointed shall also be eligible to

assist in setting examination papers. Postgraduate students so appointed may not examine at a level higher than that to which they are themselves qualified. Assistant Examiners shall not participate exclusively in oral examinations unaccompanied by an Internal Examiner but may take part in examinations of specimens or animals, where these are components of a more complex oral examination; they shall not be entitled to attend meetings of the Boards of Examiners.

The relevant Exams Officer / Head of Examinations and Assessments will not provide marking to RVC Assistant Examiners unless they have successfully completed the RVC's training, organised by the Academic Quality team ([ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK](mailto:ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK)). The Academic Quality team maintains a list of Assistant Examiners who have successfully completed the relevant training.

Assistant Examiners must be trained to become Internal Examiners, see item 3.2.

### **3.2 Internal Examiners**

Internal Examiners materially contribute to a course of study. Internal Examiners must first have been an Assistant Examiner for a minimum of six months, and successfully completed the RVC's training organised by the Academic Quality team ([ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK](mailto:ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK)). The Academic Quality team maintains a list of Internal Examiners who have successfully completed the relevant training.

### **3.3 Assessors**

Assessors shall normally be permanent members of academic staff of another institution or individuals of similar standing and/or experience, to assist in the setting and marking of examination papers in specialist areas of the curriculum. Assessors must successfully complete the RVC's training organised by the Academic Quality team ([ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK](mailto:ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK)) before the appointment can be confirmed. The Academic Quality team maintains a list of Assessors who have successfully completed the relevant training.

Assessors shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Board of Examiners and to participate in its discussions, but may not vote, except in two situations, the first is where an assessor is a curriculum manager e.g., course director/module leader, and the second is for jointly delivered awards, where Assessors from the partner may vote at the final board of examiners meeting.

### **3.4 External Examiners**

External Examiners are a key part of the RVC's quality assurance and enhancement mechanism.

The main duties of External Examiners include:

- I. Ensuring that the assessment schedule satisfies the objectives of the course and covers the specified content.
- II. Approving all written examination papers.
- III. Confirming that the standard of marking is satisfactory, by scrutinising a sample of scripts and coursework.
- IV. Observing oral and clinical examinations, but not actively examining in these.

- V. Ensuring that there are no irregularities in the conduct of the examination and that it has been conducted in accordance with the Regulations.
- VI. Attending meetings of Board of Examiners held to determine the results of examinations and participating fully in all their decisions. In exceptional circumstances and with the prior agreement of the Exam Board Chair, an External Examiner may be permitted to attend the meeting remotely via video call. At least one External Examiner must be present at the Board of Examiners.
- VII. Approving results by signing lists of results.
- VIII. Submitting a report to the College each academic year. When appropriate, External Examiners may submit a confidential report to the Principal and President of the RVC.

The External Examiners are also asked to flag at the Exam Board meeting any batches of marking that lack annotations for the purpose of helping to determine why a mark(s) has been provided.

If marking is identified that lacks annotation, the Exam Board Chair must confirm the findings of the External Examiners with the Exams Office. Once confirmed, the Exam Board Chair has two options:

- IX. To liaise with the individual internal marker(s) directly and provide feedback on how their annotations may be improved for future.
- X. To liaise with the individual internal marker(s) Head of Department with the expectation that they will discuss a lack of annotation with the relevant individual.

External Examiners may make representations to the Principal and President of the RVC if they are dissatisfied with any decision of a Board of Examiners.

External Examiners must successfully complete the RVC's training, organised by the Academic Quality team ([ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK](mailto:ExternalExamining@RVC.AC.UK)) before the appointment can be confirmed. The Academic Quality team maintains a list of External Examiners who have successfully completed the relevant training.

#### **4. Associated documentation / procedures**

RVC policies, regulations, guidance and procedural information regarding examinations and assessments can be found on the institutions website [here](#).