



# DERBY COLLEGE GROUP POLICY

## HE Board of Examiners Policy

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|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Policy Number:                      | HED-007                     |
| Executive Owner:                    | Deputy CEO                  |
| Owning Strategy / Department:       | Higher Education Department |
| Approval Board / Committee / Group: | HE Academic Board           |
| User Group:                         | Higher Education            |
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|             |                              |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Date:       | January 2021                 |
| Originator: | Director of Higher Education |
| Area:       | Higher Education             |

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**POLICY - PROCEDURES - GUIDELINES - RELATED DOCUMENTS**

## Policy Accountability and Implementation

|                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Policy Title:                     | HE Board of Examiners Policy |
| Policy Author / Reviewers:        | Head of Higher Education     |
| Policy Implementation:            | Head of Higher Education     |
| Policy Monitoring and Compliance: | Head of Higher Education     |
| Policy Review Timeline:           | Annual                       |

### Synopsis:

This document sets out the College policy on the membership, responsibilities and operation of Boards of Examiners.

## Policy Classification and Publication

### Classification

- Not Classified (NA)

### Publication

- Intranet – Policy portal
- Website – HE page

### Empowering/related legislative and/or authoritative references:

## Periodic Policy Review / Change History

*Note: Please make it clear if change/review relates to procedures, guidelines and associated documents only or it is a rational for a new or substantive policy review*

| Version | Reviewed / Modified by:  | Change History  | Advisory committee / groups or specialists                       | Review / Meeting Date/s |
|---------|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| V1      | Director of Higher Education   | Policy set  | HE Academic Board  | July 2019               |
| V2      | Director of Higher Education   | Full review   | HE Academic Board<br>HE Academic Quality and Standards Committee | Jan 2021                |
| V3      | Head of HE (Acting)/ Office for Students Compliance and Policy Officer | Policy review<br><br>Updated names to reflect changes in job titles |  |                         |
|         |  |   |  |                         |
|         |  |   |  |                         |

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

Derby College Group strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, sexual orientation, spent criminal convictions, age or any other inappropriate grounds.

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# 1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This document sets out the College policy on the membership, responsibilities and operation of Boards of Examiners. It includes information about the role of the Chair, the standard agenda to be followed and issues to be considered by all Boards of Examiners.

## 2 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- 2.1 This policy is applicable to all Higher Education programmes that are not subject to a Board of Examiners policy set by an awarding organisation/institution. This document sets out the remit of Board of Examiners to assist academic departments in managing meetings at which decisions are taken concerning student assessment outcomes. This applies to:

- Higher National programmes
- Honours degrees
- Degrees (non honours)
- Foundation degrees
- Short course at HE Levels 4 to 7

- 2.2 The College bases its Board of Examiners policy and procedures on the principles of transparency; consistency; validity; reliability and fairness and has been guided by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, *Assessment* and *External Expertise* and meets the following Core Practice:

- (a) *The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.*
- (b) *The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.*
- (c) *The provider uses external expertise and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.*

## 3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1 The terms of reference of the Board of Examiners are to:

- review and oversee assessment procedures and the maintenance of academic standards of assessment;
- apply the assessment regulations for the programme;
- moderate the module marks achieved by students;
- consider and approve the assessment marks achieved by students;
- consider and approve module results and the award of associated credit;
- determine requirements for deferred or referred students;
- examine individual student assessment profiles;
- review progress of students who have not yet attempted level completion;
- make decisions on level completion and referral in the light of overall performance;

- consider recommendations in respect of students with extenuating circumstances;
- consider recommendations following investigations into academic misconduct;
- consider and approve formal progression decisions for each student and their continuation or discontinuation on a programme of study;
- recommend the entitlement of students to an award, including classification or grade as appropriate;
- ensure that decisions on module results are accurately recorded and are available to the degree awarding body;
- action matters arising
- The board makes formal recommendations regarding awarding and progression which are ratified by the awarding body. No final results should be released to students prior to ratification.

## **4 REMIT AND MEMBERSHIP**

4.1 Responsibility for the implementation of grading schemes and for the moderation of grades by External Examiners lies with the departmental staff acting as examiners, commonly known as the Board of Examiners. A meeting of the Board must be convened when there are substantive decisions to be taken concerning the outcome of assessment. Decisions regarding final award recommendations which are taken outside the Board should be done so on an exceptional basis only and with approval of the External Examiner.

4.2 Membership will comprise:

Head of Higher Education (Chair)

Higher Education and Higher Levels Skills Manager (Deputy Chair)

Programme Leader

Leaders of all contributing modules

External Examiner(s)

Representative of the degree awarding body (Observing role only)

Secretary nominated by the Chair

Membership may also comprise:

Representative of the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) if applicable to any programme(s).

## **5 QUORUM**

5.1 For meetings of the Board of Examiners to be quorate, the following shall be present:

- The Chair or their nominee (Independent of any delivery or assessment of the programme)
- The Higher Education and Higher Levels Skills Manager
- All External Examiners
- At least one teaching representative of the curriculum area; although all tutors responsible for teaching or assessment would normally be expected to attend.

- A member of the validating organisation if decision are being made

## 6 THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

- 6.1 The role of the Chair of the Board of Examiners is to ensure that the Board carries out its responsibilities in a fair, transparent and impartial manner and in accordance with relevant College regulations and procedures. The Chair ensures that members have the opportunity to contribute to discussions and that business is conducted collegially. It is also the role of the Chair to check the draft minutes of the Board of Examiners before they are circulated to other members. The version cleared by the Chair is known as the 'unconfirmed' minutes. Minutes remain 'unconfirmed' until formally approved and signed by the Chair at the next meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- 6.2 The Chair is empowered to take action on behalf of the Board of Examiners outside the meeting where a matter is urgent or where for some reason the Board of Examiners does not have sufficient information or is for some other reason unable to take a decision at the meeting. It is good practice that, where such matters are identified in advance, the Board of Examiners should formally empower the Chair to take action and record this in the minutes. Action taken will be noted at the next meeting of the Board of Examiners.

## 7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

- 7.1 Each Board of Examiners is responsible for the setting, approval and marking of all items of assessment relevant to the programmes of study or parts thereof under its remit, within the relevant College policy and guidance on assessment matters.
- 7.2 Each Board of Examiners is responsible for the consideration and final determination of module and year results for all taught programmes of study that are under its remit, for ensuring that the standards of awards are maintained and that all the requirements for assessments that contribute to the gaining of an academic award are fulfilled, as set out in the relevant regulations.
- 7.3 At the beginning of the meeting members of the Board of Examiners must declare any personal interest, involvement or relationship with any candidate on any module or programme under consideration. The Chair has the right to ask the member to withdraw from the meeting at any point should this become necessary. The declaration of interest, including a 'null return' where applicable should be recorded in the minutes.
- 7.4 Standard Agenda All Boards of Examiners will follow a standard agenda as set out below. Boards of Examiners may, where applicable, consider additional items – for example, issues relating to professional competence.
- Conflicts of interest
  - Minutes of previous Board of Examiners
  - Report on Chair's action since the previous meeting, including the outcomes of appeals and academic integrity rulings
  - Response to previous External Examiners' reports
  - Summary statistics of modules
  - Report of distribution of degree classifications and trends through time
  - To receive an Assessment Report setting out marks and results for finalists and continuing students
  - Report on outstanding appeals and academic integrity cases

- Prizes etc
  - Comments from External Examiners, including good practice in learning, teaching and assessment and the enhancement of learning opportunities (in particular any issues relating to the Institutional enhancement theme for the year) and any other observations.
- 7.5 Each Board of Examiners shall confirm the recommended results from the Assessment Report clearly indicating recommendations for:
- final awards, including any relevant classification;
  - progression from one stage of a programme to the next;
  - interim/exit awards where appropriate;
  - repeat/referral where appropriate;
  - resubmission where appropriate;
  - termination of registrations where appropriate;
  - any awards/prizes to be made.
- 7.6 The external examiner(s) present at the Board of Examiners and the Chair will be required to sign the Assessment Grid which records the recommended results from the Board. The purpose of the external examiner's signature is not to confirm that they agree with every individual assessment decision, but that they are satisfied with the conduct of the assessment process. This should be recorded explicitly in the minutes of the Board of Examiners.
- 7.7 Chairs and examiners must not speak to students about their detailed performance or provide students with results before the official date for the release of marks. Decisions are reached by the Board of Examiners as a whole, and staff should not enter into discussions with students about the details of those decisions. The confidentiality of the meeting should be recorded in the minutes.

## **8 MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS**

- 8.1 All Board of Examiners are required to keep formal minutes of their proceedings, The purpose of the minutes of Boards of Examiners is to record decisions, to summarise any discussion relevant to those decisions (where this is required to give a context or rationale for the decision, or to establish precedents), and to capture for further consideration any areas of discussion or requirements for future action.

## **9 RESPONSIBILITY AND OVERSIGHT OF THE POLICY**

- 9.1 Responsibility for this document rests with the Head of Higher Education.
- 9.2 Oversight of this policy is through the Higher Education and Higher-Level Skills Manager.

## **10 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 10.1 The arrangements that outlined below build on previous good practice and seek to provide additional impetus and coherence.
- 10.2 All new members of staff are made aware of the policy and procedures during the formal employee induction process.
- 10.3. The policy is published via the staff policy portal, is available to students via the student VLE and is accessible via the Derby College Group website. This policy can be

provided in alternative formats on request.

- 10.4. Any updates or amendments to the policy and procedures are disseminated to the Leadership and Management team and communicated to team members.

## **11 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 11.1 The policy and procedure is subject to regular review. It will be reviewed on a three-year cycle with an annual appraisal of procedures and documentation. Review will take into account the views of students and stakeholders. DCG reserves the right to make whatever changes it deems appropriate.

## **12 GUIDELINES**

N/A

## **13 TEMPLATES/FORMS**

N/A

## **14 RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- 14.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Internal moderation Policy (Higher Education)
- Assessment and Feedback Policy (Higher Education)
- Academic Appeals Policy (Higher Education)
- Academic Misconduct Policy (Higher Education)
- Enrolment and Registration Policy (Higher Education)
- Mitigating Circumstances Policy (Higher Education)