

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE



Terms of Reference for the MFFLM External Examiner

1. Background

- 1.1 The External Examiner plays a vital role in the maintenance of academic standards and in ensuring rigorous but fair assessment of candidates. These terms of reference should be read in conjunction with the Terms of Reference for Examiners and the Chief Examiner's Committee.

2. Responsibility of the External Examiner

- 2.1 The principal responsibility of the External Examiner is to ensure that:
- The assessment and examination procedures have been fairly and properly implemented and decisions have been made after due deliberation;
 - Standards of awards and candidate performance are at least comparable with those of equivalent qualifications.
- 2.2 The external examiner's formal responsibility is to the Chief Examiner.

3. Nomination of external examiner

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the Chief Examiner in conjunction with the Academic Dean to identify a suitable person and to check that the proposed External Examiner meets the criteria for nomination listed below:
- External Examiners are people of seniority and experience who are respected in their subject areas and conversant with assessment procedures in Medical Royal Colleges. Notwithstanding the expectation, a nominee with no previous experience as an External Examiner should not automatically be excluded from appointment;
 - External Examiners are normally members of other UK higher education institutions;
 - External Examiners should normally reside in the UK;
 - External Examiners should have no conflict of interest with the Faculty, arising from personal or family relationships or from direct ties to members of staff;

4. Procedure for the appointment of the External Examiner

- 4.1 The Chief Examiner in conjunction with the Academic Dean will identify a suitable person and complete a nomination form and summary CV. Most nominations are straightforward and the Academic Dean will make the nomination to the Faculty Board on behalf of the Chief Examiner's Committee for approval by the Board.

4.2 Following approval by the Board, the President will send:

- A formal letter of appointment;
- Terms of Reference for the External Examiner;
- Terms of Reference for Examiners and the Chief Examiner's Committee;
- A copy of the MFFLM regulations.

4.3 The External Examiner is expected to confirm in writing that they accept the appointment and that they will adhere to the Terms of Reference.

5. Period of Appointment

5.1 The period of appointment is normally three years. If the External Examiner wishes to resign before the end of their normal period of office, he/she should write to the Chief Examiner giving sufficient notice for the appointment of a replacement.

5.2 In exceptional circumstances, the Chief Examiner may recommend the termination of the External Examiner's appointment before the end of his/her normal period. This recommendation must be made in writing, with reasons, to the Faculty Board and must be supported by the Academic Dean.

6. Briefing

6.1 Whilst the Faculty's letter of appointment includes an outline of the core role of the External Examiner, it is essential that a new External Examiner is carefully briefed by the Chief Examiner as soon as possible after the appointment.

6.2 The briefing should include:

- Information on the Faculty;
- The MFFLM regulations;
- The names of the Examiners;
- The calendar of events for the forthcoming year including dates of the exams and Committee meetings.

6.3 The External Examiner may ask the Chief Examiner for additional information.

7. Core duties of the External Examiner

7.1 The External Examiner:

- Should attend the OSCE examinations as an observer;
- May attend any of the Chief Examiner's committee meetings;
- May review draft SAQ question papers and proposed OSCE questions;
- Will submit an annual report.

7.2 The External examiner would not normally examine candidates.

8. External Examiner Annual Report

8.1 The External Examiner should normally produce an Annual Report which should include:

- A report regarding the assessment process including its fairness, accuracy and efficiency;
- The academic quality of the cohort examined;
- Any recommendations for improvements in the examination process;
- Examples of good practice;
- Whether any recommendations made in previous years have been acted upon properly.

9. Remuneration

The External Examiner will be remunerated in accordance with details supplied on the Faculty expenses form.

Brian Westbury, Academic Dean
Caroline Jones, Chief Examiner
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