University of Wales
Prifysgol Cymru

Collaborative Provision Exit Arrangements

Handbook for Moderators of Taught Degree Programmes

June 2016

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1.   COLLABORATIVE PROVISION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES

1.1   Introduction

In October 2011, the incoming Vice-Chancellor of the University of Wales announced publicly his intention to bring to an end the University's then validation services model of collaborative provision. This intention was given effect by the University's Academic Board and Council that same month. All collaborative centres received a letter in February 2012, serving notice that the validation of programmes of study at each would be terminated at a date consistent with the contract governing arrangements in place.

1.2   The University's Exit Strategy

In line with this, the University has developed an Exit Strategy which has, as its primary aim, the achievement of an orderly withdrawal from all validated programmes of study in a timescale consistent with the contractual arrangements in place, and in a manner that protects the reputation of the University of Wales.

The Strategy is based on two key principles and a number of strategic objectives.

Key principle 1:   The University should take whatever additional steps necessary to assure the quality of provision and ensure the academic standards of its awards.

Key principle 2:   The University should fulfil its responsibility, irrespective of contractual wording, to enable students to complete their studies leading to an award in a way that is consistent with the relevant University regulations.

Pertinent strategic objectives are:

Objective 1: to assure the quality of provision and ensure the academic standards of UW awards;

Objective 2: to enable students to complete their studies leading to an award; and

Objective 3: to maximise the effectiveness of the management and implementation of the exit strategy.

1.3   Handbook for Moderators of Taught Degrees

This Handbook is designed to be used in association with the University of Wales Taught Degrees Handbook, which contains the full set of Academic Regulations and associated protocols which together provide the regulatory framework within which all programmes are delivered and within which moderators are expected to operate.

A copy of the current Academic Regulations may be found at Appendix C.

Queries or concerns relating to anything contained in this Handbook should be addressed to the University of Wales at the following email address:
academic.unit@wales.ac.uk

2.   ROLE AND DUTIES OF MODERATORS

2.1   Introduction

This section describes the expectations of the University in relation to moderator appointments.

2.2   Role of moderators

Students who are enrolled on University of Wales validated programmes are properly regarded as being as much students of the University as those attending programmes of study at any one of the University's Accredited Institutions in Wales. In order to ensure this equivalence, the quality management and standards of a University of Wales validated programme must be managed in accordance with the detailed and documented criteria agreed at validation and within the requirements of the Academic Regulations, protocols and other associated procedures and guidance issued by the University.

Moderators play a key role in ensuring that the quality of provision within collaborative centres is safeguarded, and the standards of their awards secured. Specifically, moderators are charged with:

- oversight of the quality of the student learning experience and the student experience more generally. Moderators are expected to be familiar with QAA expectations concerning the student experience and student engagement in their most recent quality codes (Chapters B4 and B5) and to help centres to meet them. Moderators are expected to meet with groups of student representatives to discuss their learning experiences, in line with QAA codes B4 and B5, and to provide anonymous feedback from these meetings to their centres and to the University of Wales.

- responsibility to report to the University's Academic Board, principally through the Degrees and Academic Awards Board, as to whether practices and procedures at the collaborative centre and the quality of the student experience meet the requirements of the University and of QAA quality codes and that adequate resources are being maintained and kept up-to-date. During this period within which the University's Exit Strategy (see Section 1) is being implemented, the role of the moderator is especially important. In particular, they have a major part in determining whether the objectives set out in 1.2 are delivered successfully. In fulfilling this role, moderators are expected to work closely with Officers of the University.

2.3   Duties of moderators

Some centres will still be allowed to admit students under the terms of their Validation Agreements with the University during part of the Exit Phase. Moderators may be required to provide advice to collaborative centres in cases where applicants have non-standard entry qualifications, or are applying to be admitted with advanced standing. Where centres operate an admissions committee, moderators will become members of such a committee.

Moderators have the following responsibilities with regard to the examination and assessment procedures for a validated scheme of study:

- assisting, as appropriate, with external examiner induction;

- assisting, as required, with the preparation of draft examination papers (in order to ensure that they are at the correct levels etc.) prior to their transmission for approval by the external examiner(s);

- meeting with students to seek, *inter alia*, their experiences in respect of examination and assessment;

- chairing examining board meetings and ensuring (in co-operation with the University Officer) that, *inter alia*:
  - external examiners have the necessary information in order to perform their duties
  - relevant University Academic Regulations, protocols, procedures and other guidance are followed at all times;
  - the aggregation of marks and recommendations for classification of awards occurs in line with standard University of Wales practice and published criteria;
  - University conventions and procedures for meetings of examining boards are observed at all times.

2.3 Moderators and the University's Exit Strategy

As noted above, the implementation of the University's Exit Strategy is certain to place added emphasis on the role of moderators as individuals with a primary responsibility for securing the on-going quality of provision at collaborative centres, safeguarding the learning experiences of students and assessing the effectiveness of centres' processes for securing the standards of awards.

The termination of the University's contracts with collaborative centres may create circumstances in which some centres become reluctant to comply fully with University Academic Regulations, protocols, procedures and guidance. Such situations will require forceful, but tactful, intervention by University staff in general, and moderators in particular. Moderators are likely to be seen by collaborative centres as an important point of contact, and the University will expect moderators to take a lead in ensuring compliance at all times to the University's Academic Regulations, protocols, procedures and guidance, and with the Taught Degrees Handbook.

Moderators should be aware that a formal validation agreement is in place in respect of each collaborative centre which specifies the precise terms of each termination, including details of any further recruitment of students which a centre is permitted to make. The agreement also defines the responsibilities of centres in relation to the on-going provision of learning and other resources, and their duties in respect of adherence to the University's Academic Regulations, protocols, procedures and guidance.

2.4 Visits to collaborative centres

The effective discharge of moderator duties will depend on close and regular contact with the collaborative centre and with the University of Wales. Moderators will normally be required to visit each collaborative centre for which they have responsibility at least twice during each academic year. Normally at least one of these visits would involve chairing an examining board. However, moderators should be aware that centres subject to particular requirements may require additional visits.

Moderators will be expected to chair meetings of examining boards during one or more of these visits. It is also expected that they will chair meetings of Joint Boards of Study and meet regularly with staff and students of the collaborative centre.

In addition to their duties in respect of examining boards and Joint Boards of Studies, in undertaking visits to collaborative centres moderators will also be required to:

- hold meetings with institutional managers, programme directors / course leaders and teaching teams;

- hold meetings with students and with student representatives (where such individuals are appointed);

- maintain an oversight of staffing, accommodation, physical and online resources and facilities.

Moderators are required to submit reports to the UW   after each visit to a collaborative centre. The University has clear requirements in respect of moderator reporting. These are described in more detail in Section 4.

2.5   Moderators and students

As noted above, one of the duties of moderators is to meet with students of the centre(s) for which they have responsibility. This reflects the University's view that moderators play a crucial role in supporting the processes of student engagement within collaborative centres.

While recognising that local cultures and jurisdictions will inevitably shape a collaborative centre's approach to engaging students with their own learning, the University does have a commitment to meet, as far as possible the requirements set out in chapters B4 and B5 of the QAA Quality Code.

Meetings with groups of students and / or student representatives are one mechanism through which moderators can discharge their responsibilities in this regard. However, just as the University expects moderators to keep learning resources under review (see Section 5), there is also an expectation that moderators will maintain an overview of the student engagement processes and procedures that centres employ.

In this regard, some of the issues moderators may wish to address with centres are outlined below. This is by no means an exhaustive list of issues, and moderators are encouraged to adopt their own approach to addressing the student engagement agenda.

i.   Does the centre have a system for student representation in place? If so, how does it operate? If not, are there particular reasons why such a system would not be effective?

ii.   Does the centre have a particular committee or body (such as a Staff-Student Liaison Forum / Committee) in place which provides a focus for student engagement and a mechanism for hearing the student voice?

iii.   If not, would such a body provide a useful mechanism for the centre?

iv.   Is the student body represented in any way within the centre's governance structure? If not, are there particular barriers to such representation?

v.   What other mechanisms does the centre have in place to gather student opinion?

vi.   If a centre utilises student satisfaction questionnaires, how well-designed are they, and how are they employed?

vii.   Where such questionnaires are employed, how are their results analysed, discussed and disseminated?

viii.   Is there evidence that actions are taken to address issues arising from student feedback, however acquired?

ix.   Does the centre promote a culture of student engagement? What steps is the centre taking to promote student engagement?

x.   What student support infrastructure is in place with the centre? What arrangements are in place to provide pastoral care for students?

2.6   Term of office

Moderators are normally appointed for a period of three academic years. However, moderators need to remain aware the University is exiting from its current model of validation activities with all collaborative partners. As such, it is possible that a collaborative centre may find an alternative validating partner and exit prematurely from its agreement with the University of Wales. In such circumstances, the moderator appointment will cease at that time, or when the final cohort of University of Wales' students has completed their studies**.**

3.   MODERATOR INDUCTION PROCEDURE

3.1   Introduction

This section provides some information on the induction procedure for new moderators.

3.2   Moderator induction

On appointment, all moderators are provided with a moderator contract plus full information regarding the validated scheme for which they are appointed and the centre responsible for the delivery. This includes:

- Taught Degrees Handbook, which includes, inter alia, the University's Regulations and Academic Protocols, and associated documentation;
- Moderator Handbook;
- Moderator report form;
- Assessment Handbook;
- Programme documents, including programme specification.

Each newly appointed moderator will be required to attend an Induction/Briefing session before they undertake their first visit to a collaborative centre.

The induction session would normally pay particular attention to:

- the relationship between the University and the collaborative centre during the period of Exit Strategy implementation, with particular emphasis on the University's quality assurance procedures and those for the maintenance of standards;
- the moderator's role and responsibilities;
- the University's Academic Regulations, protocols, procedures and guidance;
- the relevant University procedures as they bear on the role of the moderator.

3.3   Training and Development

The University holds annual training and development days which it expects all moderators to attend. The purpose of these days is to provide an opportunity for the University to alert moderators to any changes to regulations or procedures, or to any issues of general concern that may have been identified during the past year.

The training day also provides an opportunity for moderators to share their own experiences and to learn lessons from others. In so doing, this helps to promulgate best practice and to ensure consistency of practice among moderators.

4.   MODERATOR REPORT

4.1   Introduction

This section describes the University's expectations in respect of moderator reporting which forms an important element of the University's processes for the oversight of quality and standards at collaborative centres.

4.2   Timeframe for report

Moderators are required by the University to submit a written report following each visit which they make to a collaborative centre. The report should be submitted within four weeks following the completion of the visit.

4.3   Format of report

As noted above, moderators play a critical role in securing academic standards and promoting enhancement and student engagement. Moderators are expected to visit centres twice yearly and on at least one visit ensure that enhancement and student engagement is given equal weight to any examination board activities. As such, the moderator report *pro forma* contains different sections which will need to be completed depending on the nature of the visit and moderators are asked to detail the nature of the visit and which sections have been completed.

The University provides *pro forma* which must be used for all reports.   A copy is provided in the appendices to this Handbook.

This report asks moderators to comment, *inter alia*, on:

- Examination Boards

    - General conduct of the board, an overview of course provision, presentation of data, standards demonstrated by the students, overall comments, regulations and protocols

- Assessment

    - Procedures for assessment and examination

- Engagement with students

    - Arrangements for meeting students, student representation at the centre, student satisfaction, student issues

- Engagement with staff

    - Arrangements for meeting staff, issues discussed with programmes directors and teaching teams, staff development, staff resources

- Learning Resources and resource provision

- Previous Issues and recommended action

- Areas of good practice

- Concluding comments and items for action

    - Academic standards and quality of provision, exit issues, management and communication by the University, action required and recommendations, future plans and partnerships

- End of term of office overview (where appropriate).

The report also invites moderators to identify recommendations which they wish collaborative centres to address following their visit. Following the submission of the report to the University, any recommendations are communicated to the centre.

4.4 Importance of moderator reports

The University attaches considerable importance to moderators' reports and payment of fees is conditional upon the receipt of a satisfactory report within four weeks of the visit taking place.

Reports are reviewed by a senior officer of the University, normally within one week of their receipt, to confirm that they meet the University's requirements in respect of the rigour and comprehensiveness of their reporting. Reports are then considered at the University's Quality, Audit and Review Committee (QARC).

QARC normally meets weekly to consider, *inter alia*, all moderator and external examiner reports received since its last meeting. QARC forwards reports to collaborative centres with a covering communication which draws a centre's attention to key points within the report (for example, action requirements or recommendations), and sets a deadline for a response from the centre to those points. This communication is copied to moderators, who also receive a copy of a centre's response once it has been received.

QARC also maintains an oversight of the quality of reporting by moderators (and external examiners) and will communicate with moderators in cases where elements of a report appear unclear or incomplete.

Moderators should note that, in the event of an moderator failing to submit reports that meet the minimum requirements of the University in respect of rigour and comprehensiveness of reporting, the Chair of Academic Board is empowered to take such steps as appropriate to the circumstances, including the premature termination of a moderator's contract.

5. MONITORING THE PROVISION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

5.1 Introduction

Ensuring the adequacy of learning resource provision at collaborative centres is one of the key roles of moderators. This section provides information which is designed to assist moderators in monitoring such provision during their visits to centres.

In referring to this section moderators should bear in mind that students enrolled on University of Wales validated programmes will have access to a wide range of materials *via* the University's On-line Library. However, moderators should note that the On-line Library acts as only a supplementary resource, and it is the responsibility of the collaborative centre to ensure that appropriate learning resources are provided for students.

5.2 Overview of learning resource requirements

The following guidelines are intended to ensure that students enrolled on programmes validated by the University of Wales have access to an appropriate level of learning resources to support the overall learning experience. The guidelines take the form of a set of minimum requirements together with the formulation of a resource development plan.

The minimum requirements should ensure that collaborative centres meet an acceptable threshold in terms of the provision of learning resources. However, given the wide range of centres with which the University maintains relationships, resource development plans will reflect local circumstances.

Moderators are required to use the Learning Resources section of the Moderator Report to record their observations and any concerns about centres' learning resource provision. Should any serious concerns be raised in a Moderator's Report, the matter will be referred to the centre in question and to the University's Quality, Audit and Review Committee.

5.3 Ensuring minimum requirements are met

The moderator is responsible for ensuring that learning resources for students on University of Wales' programmes are maintained and kept up-to-date during the exit phase. This can be done through a review of provision during visits to the centre and through discussions with centre managers, teaching staff and students.

Some of the issues which might provide a focus for such a review and / or discussion are outlined below.

Library provision

i.   Is there a dedicated area, of suitable dimensions, for library services? Is library access available at times that are convenient for the students, and in addition to teaching times? Are collections adequate for student numbers at the centre?

ii.   Are all core texts and journals stipulated on module reading lists provided as a core collection in the library or available on-line? Moderators may be satisfied if alternative arrangements are in place, e.g. if students are required to purchase core texts or when the collaborative centre provides students with all such texts.

iii.   Is a collection of hand-out material provided to students during the course of their studies kept centrally, in the institution's library (subject to the copyright laws pertaining to the country in question)? The collection should be available for inspection by moderators during their visits to a collaborative centre.

iv.   Has the collaborative centre designated a person to manage the library, and to be responsible for developing the resource? If yes, who is that person and his/her status? To whom is s/he responsible? Does this individual also have a role in helping students develop their skills in the retrieval and analysis of information? Are the programme directors / course leaders of validated programmes of study responsible for acquiring lists of suggested texts from the teaching staff and for advising on the acquisition of those texts?

v.   Has evidence been provided of any formal arrangements in place if the collaborative centre's library resources are supplemented by providing access to other local (e.g. public, Universities', business) libraries? A visit to the collaborating libraries may be necessary, especially if such libraries have been identified by centres as a major source of such texts and journals.

vi.   Do the students have access to the University's on-line library, and is the collaborative centre taking advice and exploring links with the learning resources or information services department at any other institution?

vii.   Are students formally introduced to library facilities (including the University's on-line library) as part of an induction course?

<u>ICT provision</u>

i.   Is there a dedicated area, of suitable dimensions, for ICT services? Is access to the IT facilities freely available during the collaborative centre's opening hours? What are the opening hours?

ii.   Are there a satisfactory number of IT workstations provided for students' use? Are these workstations networked, with a range of appropriate software provided? Is the necessary software to teach courses available?

iii.   What, if any, arrangements are in place to ensure access for students who have their own PCs or laptops, e.g. remote access or wireless networks?

iv.   Has the collaborative centre designated a person with responsibility for managing the IT resources, ideally in collaboration with any other persons with designated responsibilities for learning resource provision?

v.   Are appropriate initial skills and training in ICT provided as part of an induction course?

6.   OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT

6.1   Introduction

The maintenance of standards and the enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience are in the interests of all parties involved. The following section provides an overview of the conventions that shape the pattern of assessment and examination of University of Wales programmes. The precise rules for examining particular programmes are contained in the programme regulations, and in the definitive programme document. These rules will conform to the University's Academic Regulations, protocols, procedures and guidance, published, *inter alia*, in the Taught Degrees Handbook.

It should be noted that, although moderators play an important role in ensuring that collaborative centres comply with the University Academic Regulations etc., the primary role in assuring academic standards through assessment is that of the external examiner.

6.2   Assessment Handbook

The University has introduced an Assessment Handbook which sets out for collaborative centres to follow the University's requirements in respect of the approval and management of assessment material. It also provides information on the University's requirements in respect of moderation, double marking and feedback to students.

The Handbook also contains good practice guidelines on the development of various forms and styles of assessment.

6.3   Approval of assessments and examinations

The University requires that assessment and examination papers (in both the language of delivery and Welsh or English translations if necessary) should be prepared in draft some months prior to the assessment or examination period. Moderators play an important role in providing guidance and help to collaborative centre staff in preparing draft papers.

Once completed, draft assessment material is forwarded by collaborative centres to the University which, in turn, forwards it to external examiners to allow them to comment on the appropriateness, rigour and standard of the proposed assessment.

6.4   Marking of assessments and examinations

Maintaining an overview of the effectiveness of the marking of assessments and the examination arrangements is an important role for moderators. In this way, they support external examiners in assuring the standards of awards made by the University.

The University has defined clear grade and marking criteria (set out in the Taught Degrees Handbook) which it expects internal examiners to adopt, and it will be important for moderators to assure themselves that these criteria are understood and indeed being employed by collaborative centre staff.

The University also sets out clear policies for internal moderation and double marking, and it expects moderators to have a role in ensuring that these policies are implemented. It should be noted, however, that moderators are not themselves expected to be involved in the internal moderation process.

The relevant conventions and procedures are detailed in the Taught Degrees Handbook and in the Assessment Handbook.

6.5   Examining boards

Examining boards are part of the quality assurance process that applies to all UK university awards. As indicated in Section 2 of this Handbook, moderators are normally expected to chair all meetings of examining boards relating to programmes at collaborative centres for which they have responsibility.

One of the purposes of quality assurance processes in higher education is to ensure that standards for a given UK degree course are comparable with those of any other degree course within the same university and, by extension, with those of other UK universities. In chairing examining boards, moderators must be conscious that the involvement of external examiners in such boards is an important means through which the University can satisfy itself (and other stakeholders) of the comparability of its awards.

Details of the regulations and procedures which relate to the operation of examining boards are provided in Section 7 of this Handbook.

6.6   Examination of Part II Master's degrees

Moderators have a role in the examination of dissertations (or Major Project reports) which are submitted for examination on completion of a Part II Master's programme. The outcome of such an examination is recorded on a Result and Report Form (R & R form) which needs to be signed by the programme's moderator. The R & R Form is designed to record the mark recommended by internal examiners and that of the external examiner and requires a written report from both internal and external examiners.

The University would expect, as a minimum, that the external examiner should include the following within the R & R form:

- Detailed comments following examination of the thesis;
- Confirmation of the mark awarded;
- In the case of divergence from the marks of the internal markers, a clear rationale for why this is the case;

External examiners should ensure that their comments correspond to the mark awarded, for example, it would be expected that if a mark of 67% should be awarded, the comments would be suitably positive.

6.7   Unfair Practice

The University requires collaborative centres to ensure that students adopt good academic conduct in respect of assessment. It is essential that students and staff are made aware of the University's definitions of plagiarism and other unfair practice and the possible consequences of unfair practice - which are contained in the University's Unfair Practice Procedure (set out in the Taught Degrees Handbook).

If any form of unfair practice is suspected, centres are required to refer immediately to this procedure, which clearly explains the process that should be followed. Examining boards must be informed of any unfair practice allegations and the outcome of any unfair practice process which has been invoked. A specific examining board agenda item (see Appendix A) allows for this.

Moderators should note that the University provides collaborative centres with access to *Turnitin* software.

In terms of unfair practice by graduates, the University maintains a separate process, overseen by Academic Board, for the hearing of allegations of unfair practice against graduates or other holders of its awards.

6.8   Arbitrating examiners – Postgraduate awards

Moderators should be aware that when the decision of an examiner considering a dissertation submitted for the Master's degree by Examination and Dissertation gives rise to a case of dispute between the external examiner(s) and internal examiners it is within the power of the Chair of Academic Board, at the request of the Chair of an examining board, to appoint another external examiner who will be asked to arbitrate. The Chair of Academic Board may take into account any written reports submitted by members of an examining board.

In choosing an additional external examiner the Chair of Academic Board may also take into account, but need not be bound by, the nomination (if any) from an examining board for an additional examiner. A decision on whether or not to reconvene the examining board shall be at the discretion of this additional external examiner whose decision on this matter shall be final.

It is advised that an Arbitrating Examiner be used if there is a discrepancy of 10 marks or more between the internal and external examiners.

6.9   Appeals

It should be noted that the principal outcome of a meeting of an examining board will be a series of recommendations to the appropriate authorities relating to student progression or awards. As such, appeals cannot be made until these recommendations have been endorsed by the University.

The decision of the University with respect to the progression or award for any student is usually final. However, students can invoke appeals procedures following formal notification of that decision. It should be noted that candidates cannot appeal against the academic judgement of the examiners.

The relevant procedure depends on the stage of study that a student has reached. Details of the appeals procedures (final award and interim) are contained within the Taught Degrees Handbook.

Moderators should note, however, that all students are required to exhaust the internal appeals procedures at the collaborative centre prior to submitting and appeal to the University.

7.   EXAMINING BOARD ARRANGEMENTS

7.1   Introduction

This section of the Handbook provides details of the University's regulatory and administrative arrangements for the conduct of examining boards. This will be important for moderators in that one of their key roles is to chair all examining boards for programmes at collaborative centres for which they have responsibility.

The planning and timetabling of examining boards is undertaken by the University and each centre. Once a provisional date is established, the University will contact moderators and external examiners to confirm availability. The University's Operations and Resources Unit will also make all necessary travel and accommodation arrangements for moderators and external examiners.

Moderators are requested not to liaise directly with centres (or external examiners) in relation to these arrangements.

Examining boards are normally held in the centre concerned. In certain circumstances the University may approve the holding of an examining board *via* Skype or the video conferencing facilities at the University Registry Building in Cardiff.

7.2   Functions of an examining board

The main functions of an examining board are to:

- ensure that the diet of assessment agreed for the programme being examined has been duly administered by scrutinising examination scripts, projects, course work, and any other evidence of assessment;

- ensure that marking has been fair, internally consistent, and consistent with marking in UK higher education institutions (UKHEIs);

- adjust marks, if necessary, to comply with the above objectives (an external examiner may only recommend changes to the marks of particular students on a particular module if they have reviewed the work by all the students on that module) ;

- ensure that students have satisfied the course and University Regulations in order to either progress or qualify for an award of the University of Wales;

- determine appropriate action, such as re-sits, for students who have not satisfied the conditions for progression or qualification;

- take into account any special circumstances that may have affected student performance in any element of assessment and apply appropriate measures if necessary;

- take decisions on any borderline cases;

- decide and confirm recommendations for final degree classifications and postgraduate awards;

- discuss any cases of unfair practice or other breaches of the regulations;

- make recommendations for future assessment exercises.

Prior to a formal examining board visit by the external examiner(s) and moderator, an internal examining board should have been held to discuss the results, including any inconsistencies, borderline cases and special circumstances, and to make recommendations to the formal

examining board. The minutes of the internal examining board must be made available to all members of an examining board.

7.3   Composition of examining boards

Examination boards will normally consist of:

Chair	The Chair is normally the programme moderator. Any exception to this must be approved by the University in advance.
Moderator	The University appoints a moderator for each validated programme or group of cognate programmes. Moderators are charged with defined specific responsibilities intended to oversee the maintenance of standards and the enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience during the exit phase.
Course Teaching Team, i.e. the internal examiners	All staff involved in the teaching and assessment of the students should be members of the examining board and are required to attend the board's meetings. Requirements for attendance by internal examiners at final examining boards are described in the Taught Degrees Handbook.
External examiners	The appointment of external examiners is required for all University degree programmes. The participation of external examiners is crucial as no results sheet (see below) is valid unless signed by the external examiners. Recommendations for final awards can only be determined by an examining board at which at least one external examiner is present.
Registry representative	The University will nominate a representative of the Registry (normally a Senior Academic Officer) to review board papers and who will record the recommended results on an Outcome Recommendation Form (ORF).The University may determine that the officer should attend a board in person, or participate via Skype or video conferencing where boards are held through this medium. The role of the officer is to ensure that boards are conducted in accord with University Academic Regulations (including quoracy). They will be a full member of the board.

As far as possible, all internal examiners are required to attend the University of Wales examining board. The following minimum thresholds for attendance shall apply:

- a minimum of 75% of students' assessed work must be covered by the presence of appropriate internal examiners;

- any person responsible for teaching 10% or above of a validated scheme must attend the examining board.

It should be noted that the moderator / external examiner(s) / Registry representative have the right to declare an examining board meeting null and void if it is not constituted in accordance with the regulations outlined above (and set out in detail in the Taught Degrees Handbook). IN such circumstances, and ORF will not be completed and no recommendations will be eligible to be taken forward.

7.4   Conduct of examining boards

Examining boards are chaired by the programme moderator appointed by the University. The secretary (an appointed member of staff from a collaborative centre) will be responsible for

recording the board's decisions and any other relevant matters in minutes. The collaborative centre is also responsible for ensuring that examining board recommendations are communicated to the students in good time, and using a form of words specified by the University for this purpose which makes their provisional status clear. In this context, it must be re-iterated that all recommendations for awards are subject to final ratification by the University's Overarching Examining Board (see 7.8 below) on behalf of the University's Academic Board.

The Chair of an examining board is expected to ensure that recommendations for awards are made in accordance with the established guidelines for aggregating performance in individual areas of assessment, as specified in the programme regulations contained in the programme document. It is considered good practice to ensure that all members of an examining board are provided with a copy of the specific regulations covering the programme.

As noted above, an internal examining board meeting should have been held prior to a formal examining board. As a result of this, the course team should have already developed a consensus on any special circumstances (absence due to illness, etc.), or borderline cases and will be able to advance reasoned proposals, supported by evidence or arguments, for consideration by the other members of the board.

All members of the examining board should be provided with a set of spreadsheets detailing overall student performance in the modules being considered, as well as a final weighted average and recommended degree classification (if appropriate). It may well be the case that students being considered for a final award will have marks for modules approved by a previous examining board - these marks should be included on the consolidated mark sheet. It is useful to have a consolidated mark sheet in descending order of merit, as this will enable all borderline cases to be easily identified. This sheet should also show the average mark and the standard deviation for each module, as this will help the board to identify any anomalies, inconsistencies or possible problems with the module.

The consolidated mark sheet should be supported by information on the weighting of the different forms of assessment for each module (coursework, examinations, etc.). This information can be crucial to decisions on progression and/or compensation. It can also be vital when establishing the profile of students who are on the borderline between two degree classifications or the pass/fail divide. The presentation should assist an examining board to determine the classification of students' performances, i.e. to establish class boundaries.

Rank ordering all students' performances means that those students who are marginal between two particular classes (and between pass and fail) will be discussed at the same time. This will help promote efficiency and consistency in the board's deliberations. The mark sheet should have been amended to take account of any recommendations made by external examiners prior to the meeting.

In respect of the rounding up and down of marks, the University would not normally expect to see rounding up/down by more than 0.5% (e.g. 59.4% becomes 59%, 59.5% becomes 60%, 59.6% becomes 60%). Rounding should take place only once, as specified in any convention prepared for the purpose.

All board members must be provided with a copy of the examining board agenda, the minutes of the previous meeting and those of the internal examining board meeting.

The University's standard examining board agenda is given in Appendix A.

7.5 Examining board recommendations

Examining boards are required to consider a variety of circumstances and make a range of decisions. These may include:

- deciding on student progression;
- determining re-assessment requirements;
- determining recommendations for degree classifications at undergraduate and Master's levels;
- adjudicating on borderline cases ;
- considering special circumstances
- considering the outcomes of an unfair practice investigation.

The University's expectations in each of these cases are set out in the following sub-sections.

Progression

The pass mark for a module at undergraduate and postgraduate level is 40%. However, each programme should have clear criteria on the requirements to pass a module - this might vary from requiring each individual component that contributes to the module mark to be passed to calculating a weighted average of the component marks. Whichever approach is operated these rules must be clearly stated in the staff and student handbook and in the course document. Students should be made aware of the impact of individual marks and results on their ability to progress and complete a programme.

Students are required to complete successfully the full assessment programme for a particular level before being permitted to proceed to the next level of study, and students who pass all modules will progress automatically to the following year/ level of study. However, this does not necessarily mean that students are required to pass every individual element of the assessment. The cases of those who have failed some modules will be considered individually and in the light of the course regulations.

Course regulations must specify which, if any, of the following are appropriate.

Trailing	Which allows students to carry forward (or 'trail') failed modules to the following year (the University normally stipulates that no more than 40 credits can be trailed from one level to another). In exceptional circumstances a special case may be approved with respect to candidates needing to trail more than 40 credits.
Compensation	Means that a student is awarded a pass grade, in exceptional circumstances, for work which was not of the required standard. The practice of compensation would only be operated in exceptional circumstances as specified by University Academic Regulations, and only when there is evidence of achievement / ability to 'compensate' for the failure.
	Compensation is not automatic but at the discretion of an examining board, which will normally consider overall student performance and the benefits or otherwise of compensation against re-sits or the resubmission of coursework.
Condonement	Means that a student would not be penalised in terms of progression or award for failure in elements of assessment

equivalent to a stipulated credit value. Typically, programme regulations will limit the number of modules that may be compensated or condoned and will establish a minimum mark in the module failed to qualify for compensation / condonement.

The University's Academic Regulations set defined limits on the number of failed credits that may be condoned at any academic level. However, in general terms, the University would not expect more than 20 credits worth of modules to be condoned at any level, and no condonement to be given in a module awarded a mark of below 30%. Certain key modules may be excluded from the possibility of compensation, especially where they are pre-requisites for later modules, or where passes in them are required by other bodies, for example for professional accreditation.

Condonement of modules at Master's level is not permitted.

In summary, the principal options for progression are:

- progress with no modules pending;

- progress after compensation or condonement (with or without modules pending);

- progress with modules pending with re-sits at the next available opportunity;

- re-assessment with progression dependent on passing a certain number of modules;

- repeat of the whole year if the number of failed modules is so large that re-assessment at the next opportunity is not permitted under the regulations;

- exclusion from the course if the number of failed modules is so large as to require a student to withdraw from the programme, the student has run out of time to complete the programme or has run out of re-sit opportunities under the regulations.

Re-assessment:

As indicated above, the pass mark for a module is 40%, and there need to be clear rules on the criteria to pass a module. Candidates who have failed a module are allowed to be re-assessed at the next available opportunity, once the failure has been confirmed by an examining board.

The University's Academic Regulations and the programme specific regulations detail the number of re-sit opportunities allowed. It should be noted that modules recovered after a re-sit or resubmission can only achieve the bare pass mark (40%) in the module concerned (as opposed to the component), regardless of the mark actually obtained.

A candidate at Master's level who has failed and re-taken a module cannot be eligible for a grade of Distinction in the degree.

Many programme regulations limit the option of re-assessment to a maximum number of failed modules (expressed in terms of credit) – a candidate who failed a large number of modules for instance might be required to leave the programme or repeat the academic year/level. Candidates can be allowed to repeat an entire academic level, and therefore the marks for the repeated level would not be capped. However, the marks for any modules in the level concerned that were passed have to be forfeited. This cannot be applied to candidates in the final level of their studies.

Where re-sit examining boards are held, arrangements should be made either for the external examiner(s) to attend the board, or to be provided with the spreadsheet of results and a sample of assessed work. In any case an Outcome Recommendation Form (see below) will need to be produced and signed by the relevant members of the board. The arrangements for re-sit candidates and any re-sit examining boards should be agreed at the main examining board.

Classification – Undergraduate degrees

Among the primary functions of an examining board are to make recommendations to Academic Board on the final awards made to undergraduate candidates, and to determine progression from the taught element to the dissertation element for Master's degree candidates.

Guidelines showing how individual elements of the assessment are to be aggregated must have been agreed with the University as part of the validation process of any programme and should form the basis of all examining board decisions.

The overall degree classification is frequently based on the average marks obtained at Levels 5 and 6. This is often a weighted average. Within a level/year, modules are usually weighted according to their credit loading. While some degree schemes give equal weight to each of the last two years, most will weight the final year over the penultimate one (e.g. 60%/40%). The actual weighting to be applied will be shown in the programme document and in the student handbook validated by the University. The marks required for each classification are defined by the University and listed in the University's Academic Regulations and are as follows:

First Class Honours	70 – 100%
Upper Second	60 – 69%
Lower Second	50 – 59%
Third	40 – 49%
Fail	0 – 39%

Classification - Taught Master's degrees: Completion of Part One

In order to progress from Part One to Part Two of a taught Master's degree, a candidate should have achieved an overall average mark of 40%.

In order to be awarded a Master's degree with Distinction, candidates should have been awarded a Distinction grade in both components (taught and dissertation) or have been more successful in the dissertation component than in the examined component, provided that the aggregate mark obtained is 70% or greater and no modules have been failed.

It follows therefore that candidates achieving a mark of 70% or greater in Part One, but 69% or lower in Part Two cannot be considered eligible for a Distinction overall. The following may be of assistance when considering eligibility of a candidate for the award of a Master's degree with Distinction:

Part One mark	Candidate is eligible for the award of Distinction:
65%	Where the Part Two mark is 75% or greater;
66%	Where the Part Two mark is 74% or greater;
67%	Where the Part Two mark is 73% or greater;
68%	Where the Part Two mark is 72% or greater;
69%	Where the Part Two mark is 71% or greater;

70%	Where the Part Two mark is 70% or greater;

The overall award is calculated by the University using a weighted average of the Part 1 module results according to credit weighting, added to the dissertation mark and divided by 2. The dissertation holds a greater weighting than the taught part of the degree programme.

Dealing with Borderline cases

When a student is on the borderline between two degree classifications or pass/fail, external examiners should normally look at all the evidence, including the student profile, but must pay particular attention to any arguments put forward by the internal examiners of the collaborative centre in favour of moving a particular student into a higher category or maintaining the classification indicated by the marks.

The University has agreed that a borderline candidate be defined as one whose classification falls within the 'window of opportunity', i.e. within two percentage points of the next category of award available (e.g. 58% for consideration as a borderline 2.i/2.ii), before any rounding has taken place. Examining boards should consider all students falling within the 'window of opportunity' and should ensure that any decisions are fully minuted.

There are two main methods which collaborative centres are required to adopt in their examining board conventions for discussing borderline cases:

Exit velocity	Where a student's classification falls within two percentage points of a classification boundary (before any rounding is applied), the examining board should consider the candidate's performance in the final year of study. Where the student's final year average is in the higher classification band the examining board would normally award the higher class of degree.
Preponderance principle	Where a student's classification falls within two percentage points of a classification boundary (before any rounding is applied), the examining board should consider the proportion of marks obtained by the student in each of the classification bands. Examining boards should only consider those marks which are used to calculate the final award classification. In order to be awarded the higher classification, marks in the higher classification band must have been achieved in modules attracting a credit weighting equal to half or more of those contributing to the degree classification.

Moderators should note, however, that some collaborative centres apply a marking scheme which is not based on percentages (e.g. marks are given out of a total of 80, rather than 100).   Where such a system is in place, marks will need to be rounded up to generate the appropriate percentage mark. In such cases, a further rounding up process as described here should not be applied.

Special Circumstances

The University's Academic Regulations and protocols specify what constitutes special circumstances, these include (documented) illness, accident, close bereavement or closely related compassionate grounds.

Candidates who have made known special circumstances that have affected their performance in an examination / assessment, or which has caused them to be absent from an examination /assessment need carefully consideration in order that the appropriate action can be taken. This might include allowing a candidate a further attempt at an examination/assessment without penalty.

It is a requirement to have held discussions regarding special circumstances prior to an examining board taking place – this might include a special circumstances committee that makes recommendations on each case or by holding a separate discussion with the moderator to discuss each case. Holding discussions beforehand ensures that cases are considered fully prior to an examining board taking place.

7.6   Comments by the external examiners / moderators

Following the consideration of students' results by an examining board, the Chair of the board should request external examiners to comment on matters covering the course - teaching, examinations, marking standards, student performances, and possible future developments. Where appropriate they should also allow the opportunity for collaborative centre staff to make a brief response, usually for purposes of clarification.

Examiners, moderators and University officers also submit formal reports to the University following a meeting of an examining board. External examiner reports are sent to the collaborative centre, which is required to formally respond to any recommendations which they contain. Recommendations contained within the reports made by moderators are also forwarded to the centre and require a response in the same way.

7.7   Recording decisions of examining boards

For an undergraduate degree award examining board, or for an examining board at the end of the taught component of a Master's degree, all recommendations are recorded on an Outcome Recommendation Form (ORF). The ORF is supplied by the Registry and must be signed by all members of the board present, including the external examiners. ORFs are then returned to the Registry for processing and (where appropriate, and after approval by the University's Academic Board) issuing of pass lists and certificates.

7.8   The University's Overarching Examining Board

The Overarching Examining Board is a sub-board of the University's Academic Board, and is charged with considering and, where appropriate, ratifying recommendations made by the examining boards for individual collaborative centre programmes. The Board then recommends to the Vice-Chancellor the awards to be made to candidates in good standing.

Once recommendations from a programme examining board have been properly recorded on an ORF, they are submitted to the Overarching Examining Board for ratification. Overarching Examining Board normally meets every six weeks, so that delays to confirmation of awards are minimised.

7.8   Mid-Term Visits

The Moderator is expected to liaise directly with the collaborative centre and agree a suitable date for a mid-term visit where they will have the opportunity to meet with staff and students.

Once the Moderator has agreed a date for the mid-term visit, they should advise the Academic Unit who will log the date and confirm with the centre. The Academic Unit will arrange any overseas travel and accommodation.

8. JOINT BOARD OF STUDIES

8.1 Introduction

This section describes the role of the Joint Board of Studies (JBS) within a collaborative centre. The JBS is a mechanism through which the delivery of programmes is monitored within centres. The JBS also has a role in contributing to the management of the partnership between the centre and the University.

8.2 Purpose of the JBS

The UW Joint Board of Studies (JBS) has been in use across validated provision for a minimum of a decade, and has been a central point of focus for the maintenance of validated programmes operating at centres. Meetings of the JBS are usually once per annum, and wherever possible, meetings should be arranged to coincide with a meeting of an examining board in order to ensure maximum attendance from all parties, including student representatives.

Prior to the introduction of the exit phase, JBS were expected to take place once a year for each individual programme at a collaborative centre, mirroring the individual Annual College and Course Review (ACCR) procedure at the time. The JBS was responsible for, *inter alia*, receiving reports from the programme managers, reviewing reports and other documentation arising from QA annual cycles, approving amendments to schemes, monitoring of staffing.

It also provides a forum for more general discussion and an opportunity to reflect on the operation of the partnership between the centre and the University. In this context, during the period of the implementation of the University's Exit Strategy, the JBS has also provided an opportunity to discuss progress with the Strategy and the exit action plan agreed with the centre.

However, there have been several processes implemented during the exit phase that have diminished the importance and effectiveness of the JBS, in some cases. The University therefore no longer *requires* each centre to hold a JBS meeting, and instead the centre, together with advice from the moderator, should determine whether a meeting should be necessary.

8.3 Operation and constitution of the JBS

If it is deemed that a JBS should be necessary, centres would be expected to operate a single meeting to cover all the programmes that are validated by the University at the centre.

Membership of the Joint Board of Studies normally comprises:
- the University of Wales moderator (Chair);
- a representative of the centre management team;
- all programme directors / course leaders of programmes validated by the University;
- one or more representatives drawn from programme teams;
- one or more student representatives;
- relevant support staff (e.g. individual(s) responsible for learning resource provision);
- the University officer;
- the external examiner (in attendance).

8.4 Terms of reference of the JBS

The terms of reference of the JBS are as follows.

i.   To receive and consider the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) from the previous academic session.

ii.   To contribute to the development of the AMR for the current academic session.

iii.   To receive and consider reports from external examiners and moderators. These will be linked to the college's response to such comments and will be followed up at subsequent meetings.

iv.   To approve amendments to the structure / syllabus / assessment of the course or to refer such modifications to the University's Academic Board, through its Degrees and Academic Awards Board (in accordance with the Academic Board's criteria for amendments to programmes of study).

v.   To receive information regarding changes in course staffing, teaching resources, physical resources etc. and make any necessary recommendations to the bodies detailed under (vi) below.

vi.   To receive information as may be relevant from any internal college bodies or mechanisms, e.g. staff/student liaison committees, analysis of student feedback forms.

vii.   To consider such matters, for example, progress with the delivery of the University's Exit Strategy and agreed exit action plan, as may from time to time be referred to the JBS by either Academic Board or its Degrees and Academic Awards Board, or by the centre's Academic Board or similar body.

8.5 JBS agenda Items

Agenda items for meetings of Joint Boards of Studies will normally include the following:

i.   Minutes of the previous meeting.

ii.   Matters arising.

iii.   Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (for the previous academic session).

iv.   Preliminary documentation relating the AMR for the current academic session.

v.   Student feedback on external examiner reports.

vi.   Proposed amendments to programmes.

vii.   Procedural matters (which may be referred by to the JBS by Degrees and Academic Awards Board or some other body).

viii.   Progress with the delivery of the University's Exit Strategy.

ix.   Any other matters.

Agenda papers should be circulated by the collaborative centre to all members in good time in advance of the meeting.

Minutes of JBS meetings are normally included in a centre's Annual Monitoring Report and, as such, are reviewed by members of QARC as part of the annual review of these reports. Action items (such as proposals for amendments to a programme of studies) are reported to QARC via the University officer attending the JBS and/ or the moderator (as Chair of the JBS). Issues appropriate to the role of the Student Engagement Officer may also be passed to this Officer, who is based in the University Registry.

9.   ANNUAL MONITORING AND PERIODIC REVIEW

9.1   Introduction

This section of the Handbook deals with the University's procedures relating to the annual monitoring and periodic review of provision at collaborative centres. During the period of the implementation of the University's Exit Strategy these procedures are likely to have an enhanced profile and purpose.

9.2   Annual Monitoring

Annual monitoring is a process of critical self-reflection and review that allows centres to reflect on the effectiveness of its programmes of study in achieving their stated aims. It is a means of securing the accountability of centre managers and programmes teams to the University.

The University therefore regards the annual monitoring process as a cornerstone of its quality assurance processes, and a key means through which it can ensure the quality of the student experience at collaborative centres. The annual monitoring report (AMR) is an important source of evidence that enables the University to reach a judgement of confidence in the collaborative centre. In consequence, moderators and external examiners are asked to comment on AMRs from centres for which they have responsibility.

The AMR provides an opportunity for centres to reflect and inform the University about, *inter alia*:

- how programmes of study have operated over the previous academic session;

- how programmes of study continue to remain valid academically and achieve the aims as set out at validation, and any changes that have been made to programmes of study and any that are intended to be made in the forthcoming academic session;

- any changes in resources or staffing;

- how the centre has responded to the comments of external examiners and moderators during this period.

The AMR also provides an opportunity for centres to comment on the on-going relationship with the University of Wales, as the degree-awarding authority.

Full details of the University's procedures for annual monitoring may be found in the Taught Degrees Handbook.

9.3   Periodic Review

A new cycle of periodic review was established in January 2015, and since this time the University has undertaken an extensive programme of reviews. The decision on whether to undertake a periodic review at a centre was based on the number of students remaining, the centre's anticipated exit-date, and whether there was potential for the centre to transfer to the University of Wales Trinity Saint David upon merger.

This cycle of periodic reviews has now drawn to a close, however the University retains the mechanism to hold such a review at a centre, should it deem necessary.

Further details of the periodic review process can be found within the Taught Degrees Handbook.

10.   ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Submission of Reports and Claims

On completion of a visit to a centre moderators are required to complete the report template in appendix B. Completed reports should be submitted electronically within 4 weeks of the visit taking place to the following email address: academic.unit@wales.ac.uk.

Claims for fees **must** also be submitted electronically with the report to the same address using the standard claim form.

All claims for expenses **must** be submitted in hard copy with original receipts attached to the standard claim form to:

Academic Unit
University of Wales
King Edward IIV Avenue
Cardiff
CF10 3NS.

Point of Contact

The academic unit is your point of contact for all external queries. This will include the arranging and organization of Examination Boards, and the associated overseas travel and accommodation arrangements. Please refer to the University's travel and expenses policy for full details, including travel within the UK.

University of Wales
Prifysgol Cymru

MODERATOR HANDBOOK

Appendix A: Examining Board Agenda

Examining Boards should normally conform to the following standard agenda:

Item 1:   Welcome

The Chair should welcome those present, introduce him/herself as the Chair and explain the purpose of the meeting, i.e. to confirm results of candidates pursuing a University of Wales validated programme. The Chair should outline the key regulations governing the meeting (i.e. those in the course document, supplemented by the UW Academic Regulation, protocols, procedures and guidance) and copies of the course assessment rules must be provided to all members of the board.

Item 2:   Apologies for absence

From those internal or external examiners who are unable to attend the examining board meeting.

Item 3:   Confirmation of membership, quoracy and conflicts of interest

The Academic Protocols specify that each examining board should include:

- Chair (normally the Moderator)
- External examiner(s)
- Internal examiners
- Registry representative, usually an Academic Officer.

The University has guidelines on the number of internal examiners who should be present at an examining board in order for it to be quorate. Where the required numbers of examiners are not present, boards should be postponed.

Members should also be asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest.

Item 4: Confirmation of confidentiality of proceedings

To remind all those present that there should be no external discussion of matters considered during the examining board meeting.

Item 5:   Minutes of the previous meeting and minutes of the internal examining board

These minutes should be available to members at the start of the board, and any matters arising from the previous meeting should be reported by the Chair. Internal examining board minutes should have been made available to external examiners and the moderator at the start of the moderation process.

Item 6:   Outcomes from any verification and/or appeal cases

To receive reports of any cases which have been referred back to the examining board.

Item 7:   Personal/individual and/or general extenuating circumstances

In accordance with the Academic Regulations, an examining board can make decisions regarding candidates who have missed examinations for medical or compassionate reasons (defined in the Academic Protocols). Any such cases should be properly documented, held centrally and drawn to an examining board's attention in order that the appropriate action can be taken under (8) and (9). Ideally, these cases should have been drawn to the external examiners' and moderator's attention during the moderation process.

Item 8:   Unfair practice

Notification of any instances of unfair practice reported during the assessment period, and details of the action being taken in connection with the allegations (see University's Unfair Practice Procedure for further details on action to be taken).

Item 9:   Consideration of Module Marks

To confirm marks for cohorts of students on individual modules, using the spreadsheets to confirm marks.

Item 10:   Consideration of student performance (Progression)

To confirm the results for candidates not submitting for the final award, using the spreadsheets to confirm marks and re-sit eligibility. There can be discussion of individual candidates (e.g. borderline pass/fail cases, possible compensation / condonement cases, extenuating circumstances).

Care should be taken to ensure that the amended results are fed into the amended spreadsheets.

Item 11:   Consideration of student performance (Final Award)

To confirm the results for candidates completing the final award. This should be done using the spreadsheets to confirm marks and awards. There can be discussion of individual candidates (e.g. borderline pass/fail cases, possible compensation / condonement cases, extenuating circumstances).

Care should be taken to ensure that any amended results are recorded in the final spreadsheets.

Collaborative centres may also wish to report on final outcomes of Master's degrees which have been confirmed by correspondence since the previous examining board.

Item 12:   Report and feedback from external examiners and moderator

After the confirmation of recommended results, it is normal for the external examiner(s) and moderator to provide feedback on the whole of the assessment process. The external examiner(s) and moderator will elaborate on this in their formal reports to the University. The

collaborative centre can respond to verbal comments, although it is best to not allow protracted discussions of specific issues at a formal examining board meeting.

Item 13:   Publication/notification of results / recommendations

To ensure that the external examiner(s), internal examiners and the Chair of the board sign the Notification of Provisional Results Form provided by the University before the end of the examining board meeting. One copy is retained by the collaborative centre; the other is used by the University to produce the certificates for successful candidates.

It must be emphasised that these results are in the form of recommendations (hence use of the term 'provisional') which are subject to approval by the University's Overarching Examining Board.

Item 14:   Notification to candidates of arrangements for deferral, referral, and re-sit assessment

To confirm the arrangements for informing candidates of the outcome of decisions affecting candidates who have deferred or failed.

Item 15:   Date of next meeting

To agree a provisional date for the next examining board, to be confirmed in writing at a later date.

Item 16:   Any other business

To discuss and agree other such business as may be required.

University of Wales
Prifysgol Cymru

MODERATOR HANDBOOK   Appendix B: Moderator Report Form

This Appendix provides a copy of pro forma report form which moderators are required to complete.

Moderator Report

Moderators play a critical role in quality enhancement and student engagement activities and are normally expected to visit centres twice yearly for a mid-term visit and an exam board visit. All visits must be approved by the academic unit before they are undertaken.

Name of Moderator	
Name of Collaborative Centre	
Date of Examining Board / Visit	
Type of Visit: Examining Board / Skype/ Mid Term Visit/ Resit Board / Final Visit/ Other (please specify)	
Academic Year	
Title of Programme(s) of Study	
Home Institution / Other Professional / Institutional Affiliation If retired please enter last position e.g. Former Lecturer at xxxxx University	
Moderator Email Address	

Moderator reports should be submitted in typescript within **four weeks of the completion of a visit to a collaborative centre**. Moderators should note that the payment of fees and expenses can only be authorised once a comprehensive report has been received and approved by the University.

Please email the completed moderator report to: academic.unit@wales.ac.uk.

Declaration: by submitting this report electronically, I confirm that I undertook the visit detailed above and the contents of this report are accurate. I also confirm that I performed my duties in accordance with the guidelines for the University of Wales moderator.

Moderators are normally expected to visit centres twice yearly. The University anticipates that the majority of visits will be framed around examining boards. However, Section 2 of the Moderator Handbook notes the critical role moderators' play in quality enhancement and student engagement activities, particularly during the Exit Phase and moderators are expected to meet with staff and with students without staff being present on at least one of the two scheduled visits.

When completing the report, please note the following:

Examining Board Visits: Complete all sections, apart from 3, 4, and 5 (unless these activities are undertaken during the visit).

Mid Term Visit: Generally mid-term visits focus on student engagement and staff development activities and you should expect to complete all sections apart from 1 and 2.

Final, End of Term Office visit: If moderators are making a final, end of term of office visit to a centre please complete Section 9 in addition to the relevant sections.

1. EXAMINING BOARDS

1.1 General conduct of the board(s)

Were you satisfied that the board was conducted properly and in accordance with University of Wales' requirements? **YES / NO**

Please comment e.g. the conduct of any internal examining board, the attendance and participation of internal examiners, the quality of discussion of individual cases, any discussions over exam board marking, responses by centre staff to comments by the external examiner(s).

1.2 Presentation of data

Were you satisfied with the presentation of assessment data? **YES / NO**

Please comment as appropriate e.g. Was the recommended spreadsheet format followed? Was the data free from arithmetic (or other) error?

1.3 Standards demonstrated by the students

Was the board satisfied with the general quality of the students' work in reflecting the level of the qualification and the aims and objectives of the programme? **YES / NO**

Please provide a commentary in support of your answer.

1.4 Overall Comments

Please comment on any areas identified for corrective action and any areas of excellence and provide evidence to support the comments made.

1.5 Regulations and Protocols

Were you satisfied that the UW Regulations and Academic Protocols were applied in full by the centre?   **YES / NO**

Do you have any concerns that full application is at risk in the future? Please indicate the evidence on which you base this judgement.

2.   ASSESSMENT

2.1 Procedures for assessment and examination

Were you satisfied that procedures and protocols were applied with consistency, rigour and impartiality, and that internal marking was conducted in an appropriate manner?

                YES / NO

Please provide a rationale and evidence for your response.

3.   ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS

3.1   Arrangements for meeting students

Were you satisfied with the opportunities you were given to meet students?   **YES   /   NO**

Please provide further comment below on the following:

- whether the meetings were private;

- the number of students you met;

- the extent to which they were representative of the programme cohort as a whole;

- whether they included nominated student representatives.

3.2   Arrangements for student representation

Were you satisfied that adequate arrangements are in place in the centre to allow the student voice to be heard? (Please refer to quality codes [B4 and B5]).   **YES   /   NO**

Please describe the arrangements that are in place, and provide evidence on their effectiveness. How far does student representation meet the expectations of the QAA Quality Code on student engagement. Please indicate how you have helped the centre meet QAA expectations.

3.3   Student satisfaction

What did the meeting(s) with students reveal about their overall level of satisfaction with their learning experiences and the resources provided (including staffing)? How far does the student experience meet the expectations of the QAA Quality Code? What have you been able to do to help the centre meet QAA expectations in this respect? Does the centre's policies and strategies address student experience and student engagement and reflect QAA expectations in their Quality Code (Chapters B4 and B5)? What have you done to address any shortfalls in this respect?

3.4   Student issues

Did students raise issues that they wished to draw to the attention of the University?
YES / NO
Please provide details of any such issues with any recommendations for action which you might wish the University to consider.

4. ENGAGEMENT WITH STAFF

4.1   Arrangements for meeting staff

Did you have any opportunities (other than at the examining board) to meet staff during the visit?   **YES / NO**
If no, please explain. If yes, please provide details of the meetings and specify with whom you met.

4.2   Staff issues

Did staff raise issues that they wished to draw to the attention of the University?
YES / NO
Please provide details of any such issues which you might wish the University to consider.

4.3 Staff development

Staff development is an essential part of the moderator role. Did you undertake any staff development activity during your visit?   **YES / NO**

If yes, please explain if this was at the centre's request, or on your own initiative and what staff development was provided?   If no, please explain why this was not required.

4.4 Staff resources

Were you satisfied that adequate staffing resources (both in terms of number and appropriateness of qualifications) are being applied?   **YES / NO**

If yes, please provide evidence to support your response. If no, please advise what action is required to address this.

5.   LEARNING RESOURCES

5.1 Resource provision

Were you satisfied that adequate learning resources are being provided to the programme(s)?   **YES / NO**

Please comment e.g. are reading list/recommended texts available from the library? What is the centre doing to ensure its library provision remains current? Are students aware of the University's Online Library? Are the ICT facilities adequate? What evidence is there of induction/training on the use of library resources and ICT facilities? Does the centre have VLE software available? Are there arrangements for students to use other libraries in the local area? Do you have any concerns about the library/ICT provision?

6.   PREVIOUS ISSUES

If issues were raised in your last report, or in the last report submitted by your predecessor, do you feel that they have been addressed appropriately and successfully?
YES / NO / NO PREVIOUS ISSUES
Please comment below on any recommended action required by either the centre or the University of Wales.

7.   GOOD PRACTICE

7.1 Good practice

Please identify any distinctive or innovative elements of the programme(s), and any features of good practice that you have noted.

8.   CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND ITEMS FOR ACTION

8.1 Concluding comments

Were you satisfied that academic standards and the quality of provision have not been compromised through financial, contractual or other considerations?   **YES / NO**
Please provide details below.

8.2 Exit Issues

Were there any particular issues related to the University's exit plans for the centre which you would wish to draw to the attention of the University?   **YES / NO**   If yes, please provide details below.

8.3   Management and Communication by the University of Wales

Please comment on the University's processes for managing and communicating with its moderators and list any recommendations you have for improvement.

8.4   Action Required / Recommendations

Please identify any items you require or recommend that the centre and/or the University of Wales take action on. Please prioritise these requirements.

8.5   Future Plans and Partnerships

Please can you confirm if the centre has managed to find another partner   **YES / NO** If Yes, please give details including name of new partner.

8.6 Proposed Date of Next Exam Board

The University will make all arrangements for the next exam board. To assist us with the process, please agree with the centre a **provisional** date for the next exam board. The University will take this date into account when planning and will confirm the exact date once finalised. However, please note that preferred dates will depend upon resources and the availability of all parties and therefore the provisional date may be subject to change.

W/c

9. END OF TERM OF OFFICE OVERVIEW

If this is the final visit to the centre at the end of your term of office as moderator, you are asked to provide an overview of the whole of that period. In particular:

- Evidence that the quality of provision of programmes for which you have been moderator has been enhanced (or otherwise) during your period of appointment;
- Whether you are confident that standards of programmes for which you have been moderator can continue to be secured.

Signed:……………………………………… Date Submitted:………………………………

University of Wales

A1 - Academic Regulations

for programmes of study approved by the
University of Wales for Delivery at Collaborative Centres

Taught Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates

Approved by the Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Academic Board for implementation in respect of all candidates following all years of programmes of study at collaborative centres leading to awards of the University of Wales, with effect from 1 October 2016.