

Validation Guidance Pack – External Assessors



Validation

University of the Arts London

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1.0 Briefing and Guidance for External Assessors

1.1 The role of the External Assessor

Context

At the University of the Arts London, the development of new courses and the enhanced monitoring or revalidation of existing courses is devolved to Colleges and is generally progressed through informal meetings of the course team with input from internal advisers, external assessors and colleagues from the Assessment and Quality unit. For most developments two formal stage meetings will also be held where a full discussion can take place to monitor progress.

Role

External Assessors act as an independent adviser to the course team throughout the course development process. Undertaking this role will involve participation in two formal stage meetings, in which discussion will focus on The Validation Document. In addition, External Assessors are required to submit written comments in time for the Stage I and II meetings. If an External Assessor is unable to attend a stage meeting, notification must be given to the course team as soon as possible as this may result in the stage meeting needing to be rescheduled.

As an academic or professional subject specialist, an External Assessor supports the course development by evaluating the course and its content from the point of view either of his/her experience of courses in the subject area at a similar level or of his/her knowledge and experience in the relevant professional or industry sector.

The External Assessor should keep in mind that that the validation process is developmental in scope, with the two Stage meetings assisting and enhancing course development, rather than considering the course as a completed entity. It should be noted that final approval is not given at the Stage II meeting, and course development is likely to continue after the meeting, prior to the course being submitted to the University's Validations Sub-Committee (VSC) for final approval. In this light, the Stage meetings are expected to involve open discussion between all present, rather than a combative or defensive approach. Drawing out any areas of concern is encouraged however, in the context of a robust yet positive approach to the consideration of the course.

1.2 Guidance on the Validation process

It is through the validation process that the University of the Arts London maintains and enhances the quality of its higher education courses. The process is designed to ensure that:

- ★ to secure for students a high quality of educational and academic experience. Its most important function is to assess the quality and standards of the courses;
- ★ to ensure that each course meets the requirements for the relevant award, and that the standards set are appropriate to the award;
- ★ to ensure that the human and physical resources available, and the environment within which each course is offered, are sufficient and appropriate to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes set.

Validation comprises outline approval by the University's Academic Planning Sub-Committee, development approval through Validations Sub-Committee (VSC), and two course development meetings (Stage I and II), and final approval at VSC. A distinctive feature of the system is the different external perspectives embodied in the roles of course advisers and assessors who participate in the development stages. Course developments should align with the University's

Diversity Strategy by ensuring that diversity and inclusiveness are addressed within the curriculum and approach to learning and teaching.

<i>Internal Advisers</i>	Advisers normally come from another college within the University. They bring non subject-based expertise of relevance to the development, e.g. course structures, changes in teaching and learning methods.
<i>External Assessors</i>	Assessors are external experts chosen for the relevance of their subject-based knowledge. A new course validation will have two External Assessors appointed (one from industry/ a practitioner, and one with an academic background, or two with an academic background). Assessors must be independent and should not have a close relationship with the school through teaching, research or external examining.

Each stage of the validation has a different focus and its requirements must be met before the course can proceed. Throughout the process a Validation Log is kept, tracking issues and developments as they arise.

<i>VSC Development Approval</i>	The course team submits a development proposal to the University's Validations Sub-Committee (VSC), which considers the detailed proposal including the purpose, fit with the University mission, evidence for demand and details of resource planning.
<i>Enhanced Monitoring</i>	All validated courses must undergo an enhanced monitoring event in a 4 yearly cycle, followed by revalidation for some courses. This process supports a cycle of continuous monitoring, with a quality enhancement focus. Its purpose is to secure for students the highest quality of education which is possible within the resources available to the course. External Assessor written comments should be submitted prior to the meeting using the comments template at annex 1 and will be informed by a written appraisal of the course, supported by External Examiner and Continuous Monitoring Reports and the course handbook. (Please note, where course teams plan to restructure or rewrite parts of the course, revalidation is required. In this instance, External Assessors will be provided with a summary of proposed changes and a draft of the revised Handbook).
<i>Stage I (new courses)</i>	The Stage I meeting should be held when the outline structure of the course has been agreed and the aims and outcomes written, but before completion of the full unit descriptions. External Assessor written comments should be submitted prior to the meeting using the stage I template at annex 2.
<i>Stage II</i>	The Stage II meeting is held when the team consider the course to be complete, and are ready to present an overview of the course to the Stage II panel through the updated Validation Document including detailed unit descriptors, contact hours and a final draft of the Programme Specification. External Assessor comments should be submitted prior to the meeting using the stage II template at annex 3.

These meetings offer structured support to staff and each stage results in a full written account which are then used to identify and inform the work required for the next stage, and are also recorded in the Validation Log.

VSC Final Approval

Once the course team have made the required amendments following the stage meetings, the appropriate sections of the Validation Document are submitted to VSC.

VSC considers the Head of College's recommendation and checks that;

- The validation has followed the required procedures and external advice has been received and taken on board in the finalisation of the course
- All University requirements have been fulfilled

1.3 Final Approval

The Validations Sub-Committee will decide on the possible outcomes:

- a) *Continuing Approval (approval without time limit)*. This is appropriate where the validation, review or revalidation of a course indicates that it is meeting the requirements for the award satisfactorily and there are no major problems. Although approval is without a time limit, it should be noted that all courses in the University are subject to a continuous monitoring process and to a process of enhanced monitoring on a periodic cycle of 4 years.
- b) *Fixed Approval (with a time limit)*. This means that the validation of the course runs out after the period set and the course must be reviewed or revalidated if it is to run further.
- c) *Non Approval*.
- d) *Conditions of Approval*. VSC can impose conditions of approval on a course. These requirements must be fulfilled in order to ensure that the programme meets University regulations and the standard required for the award. Conditions must be carried out and will always have a specific deadline attached, when the college will report back to VSC.

1.4 STAGE I VALIDATION – COMMENTS FORM

External Assessors and other external participants in University of the Arts London validation procedures are asked to offer critical comment and constructive advice on the course development as presented in the course aims and learning outcomes, unit descriptors and programme specification. Written comments are required prior to the Stage I and II meetings, and the following template should be used in support of this.

An External Assessor is normally expected to comment on each of the headings but need not respond to each and every prompt. Assessors are also able to offer comments on any other aspects of the development or documents not included in the list of prompts.

Name of External Assessor:

Course:

Course design (for stage I, this will include the outline structure, course diagram, and course aims and outcomes):

- Is the Course Design so far clear, coherent, well-organised and student friendly?

Course Aims and Outcomes

- Do Course Aims express the broad purposes of the course?
- Do Course Outcomes set out clearly what students are expected to achieve?
- Are Course Outcomes set at an appropriate level of achievement? (ie in terms of the QAA Framework for higher Education Qualifications)

Outline Course Structure

- Is outline course structure appropriate?
- Is the course diagram clear? Does it give the student a clear overview of how the course components work in terms of progression, duration, choice and timing?

Validation Document

- Please provide any comment or query relating to the validation document (i.e. information provided on planning and resources, outline of provision, market analysis or anything in the validation log).
- Areas for consideration may include resources, selection criteria, diversity, and ethical awareness and sustainability)

1.5 STAGE II VALIDATION – COMMENTS FORM

External Assessors and other external participants in University of the Arts London validation procedures are asked to offer critical comment and constructive advice on the course development as presented in the course aims and learning outcomes, unit descriptors and programme specification. Written comments are required prior to the Stage I and II meetings, and the following template should be used in support of this.

An External Assessor is normally expected to comment on each of the headings but need not respond to each and every prompt. Assessors are also able to offer comments on any other aspects of the development or documents not included in the list of prompts.

Name of External Assessor:

Course:

- **From your experience of similar courses at this level and/or from the point of view of your subject expertise, are the standards and content of this course appropriate for an award at this level?**

Course Aims and Outcomes

- Do Course Aims express the broad purposes of the course?
- Do Course Outcomes set out clearly what students are expected to achieve?
- Are Course Outcomes set at an appropriate level of achievement? (ie in terms of the QAA Framework for higher Education Qualifications)
- Are Course Outcomes assessable and assessed on the course?

Outline Course Structure

- Is outline course structure appropriate?
- Is the course diagram clear? Does it give the student a clear overview of how the course components work in terms of progression, duration, choice and timing?

Assessment Strategy

- Are the methods of assessment, and the timing and loading of assessment appropriate for this course?
- Is appropriate use made of formative and summative assessment?
- Is the assessment diagram (or assessment points included in the course diagram) clear?

Learning and Teaching

- Are learning and teaching methods appropriate for the course?
- Are they inclusive?

Curriculum and Unit Descriptors

- Is the curriculum appropriate for a course at this level in this subject area (as described in learning outcomes, indicative content and reading lists of the units)?
- Does the course have an appropriate balance of professional and practical and academic content?
- Do you think the cultural diversity of the student body is catered for?
- Is there evidence that the curriculum is informed by diversity?
- Is the size, duration, contact hours, workload and assessment for units appropriate?

Additional Comments

- Please provide any additional comments or queries for discussion at the Stage II meeting.

1.6 VALIDATION OF STANDALONE UNIT – COMMENTS FORM

External Assessors and other external participants in University of the Arts London validation procedures are asked to offer critical comment and constructive advice on the development as presented in the draft unit specification. Written comments are required prior to the unit validation event, and the following template should be used in support of this.

External Assessors are normally expected to comment on each of the headings but need not respond to each and every prompt.

Name and Academic Institution of External Assessor:	Course and Unit:
Unit Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the Unit Overview clearly express the broad purpose of the Unit?• Do the Unit Learning Outcomes set out clearly what students are expected to achieve?• Are the Unit Learning Outcomes set at an appropriate level of achievement? (ie in terms of the QAA Framework for higher Education Qualifications)	
Learning and Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are learning and teaching methods appropriate for the course?• Are they inclusive?	
Assessment Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the methods of assessment, and the timing and loading of assessment appropriate for this unit?• Is appropriate use made of formative and summative assessment?• Do you think the cultural diversity of the student body is catered for?• Is there evidence that the curriculum is informed by diversity?	
Additional comments	



2.0 External Assessors claim for fees and expenses

All External Assessors who wish to be paid via the University payroll must bring the following documentation to their first visit to the University:

- ★ either a passport, visa or British birth certificate (original)
- ★ proof of National Insurance number: a copy of either a National Insurance Card, a P45, a P60, or an officially marked tax letter displaying their NI number.

It is a legal requirement that original document/s proving eligibility to work in the UK are handed to a member of UAL staff to be photocopied and verified.

Current Payment Process for External Assessors

External Assessors are requested to submit a claim form as a means of being paid the agreed fee and expenses for work undertaken during the process of course development.

Changes have come into effect this year (2017) from HMRC which will affect the way External Advisors are paid by the University. Instead of being paid from an invoice, they are now required to go through the Payroll system (see claim form 2.4 in this document).

2.1 Information for Staff

Informing Externals of this Requirement

The guidance and claim form for External Assessors is available at the following link

<http://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/strategy-governance/public-information/guidance-for-externals/validation-advisors-guidance/>

Please ensure that any new External Assessors are provided with this information along with any letter confirming their participation. It must be made clear to External Assessors that, should they wish to submit a claim form to Payroll, they must make arrangements for their original documentation to be verified by a member of staff.

Verifying the documentation

During the first visit (for example at the Stage I) by the External Assessor, the original documentation should be collected from the External Assessor and photocopied using the guidelines on the required Eligibility to Work in the United Kingdom Payroll form. Should you have any queries regarding the copying please contact the Senior Administrator (Quality) within the Assessment and Quality team.

Scanned copies of the completed form should be emailed to examiners@arts.ac.uk. If there are any expense receipts, hard copies only will be accepted and can be sent to the address below. Please send within one month of the validation meeting.

University of the Arts London, 272 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7EY within one month of the validation meeting. If you have any queries please contact Assessment and Quality on 020 7514 6203 or examiners@arts.ac.uk.

2.2 External Assessors claim for Standalone One Unit Development

Fee

External Assessors engaged with the development of standalone units are paid £75.00

Complete the same form for External Assessors.

2.3 External Advisors: Guidance for Fees and Expense Claims

The claim form is on Page 2 of this document. Due to tax and national insurance regulation changes on 1 April 2017, the **first time** you visit the University you need to bring proof of your eligibility to work in the UK (please bring your passport/visa/British birth certificate) and also a copy of proof of your National Insurance number (NI card/official tax letter).

More information can be found on the Assessment and Quality website:

<http://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/strategy-governance/public-information/guidance-for-externals/validation-advisors-guidance/>

EXPENSES

- Receipts** All expense claims must be accompanied by hard copy receipts for expenditure.
- Train travel** Train travel (standard class only) should be booked in advance by your college office. Please contact them with your requirements in advance.
- Hotels** If hotel accommodation is required this must be booked by the college in advance. Please contact your college office to make arrangements in advance (a guide of £125 per night including breakfast as of November 2015).
- Flights** Again, your college office will be able to book these in advance for you (economy class only). The cost effectiveness and environment benefits of using alternate modes of transport will be taken into consideration.
- Car mileage** Will be reimbursed at the current standard mileage rate paid by University of the Arts London, which is 40p per mile. The availability and suitability of alternate public transport facilities should be taken into consideration before driving.
- Taxis** Taxi travel is expensive and should be used as an exception rather than the norm. Most UAL sites are within easy reach of public transport and in central London the underground system is often as quick and is much more cost effective. Where you do need to use a taxi you should ensure you can justify the expense and that there are good operational reasons for so doing, such as the need to carry heavy files or where there is a genuine efficiency saving.
- Subsistence** Breakfast - This is limited to a maximum of £10 per claim, supported by receipts.
Lunch - This is limited to a maximum of £15 per claim, supported by receipts.
Evening meal – This is limited to a maximum of £25 (including drinks) per claim, supported by receipts
The University will also reimburse reasonable actual costs in respect of refreshments such as tea, coffee, and soft drinks and snacks taken between meals.

No subsistence may be claimed when staying with friends or relatives.

Locally Devised Contract No. Please leave this box blank.

Please send a hard, signed copy of your claim form along with any receipts to: Assessment and Quality, University of the Arts London, 272 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7EY or email to examiners@arts.ac.uk. For any queries regarding your fee, please contact Assessment and Quality on 0207 514 6203 or email examiners@arts.ac.uk



2.4 External Advisors Claim Form v.1.8

This form should only be used by staff who are HE External Advisors (e.g. for Enhanced Monitoring events)

Employee Details:

Title:	Forename(s):	Surname:
Male / Female	National Insurance No.	Date of Birth:
Daytime Tel.	Email:	

Additional Information (New Staff Only – If unsure please check with your local College office)

Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Have you recently changed your bank details? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has your address changed since your last payment? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name of Bank/Building Society:
Address:	Sort Code:
	Account Number:
Post Code:	Roll Number:
Daytime Tel.	Name of Account Holder:
Ethnic Origin:	Do you consider yourself disabled? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nationality:	Nature of Disability:

Signature of Employee:

I declare that the information given by me on this form is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge

Signed _____ Date _____

Payment Details:

Locally Devised Contract No. _____ Date(s) Worked: _____

Course: _____ College: _____ Degree Level: UG / PG

FEE £ .

EXPENSES

Expenses are not subject to deductions in accordance with HMRC guidance ESM4504.

Travel	£	Mileage	£		
Travel details					
Subsistence	£	Sundry	£		
		TOTALS:	EXPENSES	FEE	TOTAL

For office use only:

Budget Code 12056101

___ Assessment and Quality

Payroll Code 151

702 (Research)

Budget Holder use only This agreed fee payment has been approved for payment.

Signed

Print Name

Date

HR Payroll use only

Entered by

Date

Checked by

Date

Notes for Employer:

1. It is the responsibility of the employer to act in accordance with section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. This means establishing the employee's eligibility to work in the UK before any work is carried out. Failure to carry out these checks can lead to a fine of £10,000 and/or individual prosecution under the Race Relations Act 1976. For more guidance please contact your HR Consultant.

2. Rates of pay are dependant on the nature of the work being carried out. If you are unsure of an appropriate rate for a specific type of work please contact your HR Consultant. Hourly rates are updated annually and are published on the HR website: <http://www.arts.ac.uk/hr>

3. Certain types of work have agreed rates and/or specific payment claim forms. Please ensure that this form is not used for these payments. Refer to HR website for Guidance

4. The completed form must be received by **HR Payroll** before the published cut off dates if it is to be paid in the current month. Claims received after this date will be processed in the following months pay-run. For information on cut-off dates please visit the Payroll website.

Notes for Employee:

1. Please ensure all details are written clearly.

2. If you have been given this form to complete on behalf of your employer, please return it directly to the College/School/Service where you were employed for completion. They will forward it to HR Operations on your behalf.

3. For a new employee, please note that if any of the requested documentation below is missing, the form will be returned to the authorising manager. This will result in a delay of payment.

4. If you are known by more than one name, please ensure you are consistent in your approach for all payments including other types of work performed for the University.

5. If you are a new employee or re-joining after a period of absence, before any work is carried out, you agree to provide the University with evidence of your eligibility to work in the UK, in accordance with section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. You also agree to provide your National Insurance number. If you do not have a National Insurance number (Temporary numbers beginning with TN are no longer accepted) you agree to provide evidence that you are in the process of applying for one and agree to forward the number to the University once it has been issued. Failure to provide this documentation will result in a delay to your payment.

6. Unless a current P45 is provided, you must complete and return a P46, which is available from your College/School/Service or employing department. If none of the statements on the P46 apply to you, return the form unsigned with all the other paperwork. However to ensure that we operate the correct tax code for you, it would be helpful if you could fill out the employees details under section 2 left hand side (omitting payroll number and department branch).

7. Please note that the UAL does not operate P38(s) because of the 'ad-hoc' nature of the work, which does not comply with HMRC rules.

8. This payment will be subject to Tax and National Insurance.

9. Payment will be made on the last working day of the month, provided that the form is received by HR Operations by the monthly cut-off date, published on the HR Website. Claims received after the "cut-off" date will be held over for payment in the following month.

10. For the purposes of the Wages Act 1986, you hereby authorise the University to deduct from your payment any sums due from you to the University including any overpayment, loans or advances made to you by the University. Recovery of overpayments will only be actioned following consultation on the rate of deduction.

11. The University is committed to its equal opportunities policy and, as part of the requirements of your work you are required to implement this policy. Any breaches of the policy will be considered under the Universities disciplinary rules and procedures.

12. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on all employees while at work to take reasonable care of themselves and of anyone who may be affected by their acts and omissions. Employees also have a duty to cooperate with the university in order to comply with its own duties under the act and associated legislation.

13. You hereby explicitly consent to the University collecting, holding and otherwise processing personal data (including sensitive personal data) relating to you. The University will only process such data when and insofar, as is necessary to do so in order to further its legitimate interests. Please note that the University would appreciate your co-operation in keeping such data up to date by informing personnel and payroll of any change of these details. This will ensure communications and payments in the future reach you promptly

Your signature on this form signifies your acceptance of the above.