



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

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UCEM Handbook for External Examiners

2017/18

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the Handbook is to assist both new and continuing External Examiners to carry out their role of External Examiner for the University College of Estate Management (UCEM).

The role of External Examiner is central to UCEM's quality assurance procedures and plays a vital role in the maintenance of academic standards and ensuring fairness to all students.

UCEM understands the demands this key role has on the appointed External Examiner and will do everything to support them.

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with the UCEM Code of Practice – External Examining and *Chapter B7: External Examining* of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QAA, 2011).

Additionally, the External Examiner section of the UCEM Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), to which you will be given access following your appointment, also provides up-to-date information including Module/Unit Board and Award and Progression Board dates, fee schedules and previous EE reports.

Please note that at the time of writing the post of Head of Assessment is vacant. However, any matter for which the Head of Assessment is responsible will continue to be handled by another colleague for the time being. Please continue to direct correspondence to the Head of Assessment.

2. Background Information

Introduction to University College of Estate Management (UCEM)

UCEM is a registered charity, operating under the terms of a Royal Charter. We offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as providing professional development courses and tailor-made corporate training courses. UCEM is also a leading provider of the new apprenticeships that were developed by the surveying trailblazer employer group and have been introduced as part of the apprenticeship reform programme in England. We have held Taught Degree Awarding Powers since 2013 and were awarded University College status by the Privy Council in 2015. UCEM's current principal is Ashley Wheaton who was appointed in 2013.

UCEM Senior Leadership Team

Ashley Wheaton – UCEM Principal and CEO

Jane Fawkes – Deputy CEO and Vice Principal, Strategy and Business Management

Paul Basham – Vice Principal, Finance and Resources

Stephen Bartle – Head of Commercial and Business Development

Wendy Finlay – Vice Principal, Student Experience

Aled Williams – Dean, Research Innovation and Partnerships

Nick Moore – Dean, Learning and Teaching

Lynne Downey – Dean, Online Education

For further details on the Senior Leadership team, along with listings of UCEM academic staff and Board of Trustees, please follow the link below:

[Our people - University College of Estate Management](#)

Our heritage

We can trace our roots back over 100 years, but we were officially founded in 1919. Since the early days we have offered 'online learning' courses, initially through correspondence courses and most recently using our state-of-the-art virtual learning environment. Since 1967 we have delivered all of our programmes through distance learning. In recent years increasingly this has been through a supported online approach, which is itself in transition to an entirely e-learning model. As noted above, we remain an independent self-funded charity.

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UCEM Milestones

1919	The College of Estate Management is founded under the auspices of the Chartered Auctioneers' and Estate Agent's Institute. 35 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London – CEM's original home
1922	Grant of Royal Charter
1928	Coat of Arms approved
1938	The College was recognised as an official institution of the University of London with the BSc in Estate Management becoming both an internal and external degree.
1967	The College severed links with the University of London and became associated with the University of Reading. Full time students became part of the University and the Faculty of Urban and Regional Studies was created.
1973	The college builds a new premises at University of Reading campus at Whiteknights
1977	Her Majesty the Queen grants her patronage to the college
1988	His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales accepts an invitation to become President of the college
1989	The college buys Shinfield Grange to provide additional teaching space
1998	Her Majesty the Queen relinquishes her patronage and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales become Patron of the college
2009	Launch of the new Virtual Learning Environment
2013	Taught Degree Awarding Powers granted
2015	Achieved university college title and became University College of Estate Management (UCEM)
2016	UCEM moves to a new location at 'Horizons', Queens Road, Reading in July 2016.
2016	UCEM achieves a successful outcome from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)'s Higher Education Review (HER), demonstrating that UCEM meets UK expectations in all areas. Please see the UCEM Higher Education Review Report .

3. Accreditation & recognition

UCEM works closely with the leading professional bodies in the Built Environment to ensure that our programmes provide the knowledge and understanding required to achieve chartered status. These include the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), the Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE) and the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). All our bachelor and masters level programmes are formally accredited by at least one of these bodies. Our Foundation degrees in Surveying Practice and Construction Practice also are recognised by RICS and CABE for Associate membership.



Under the current policy of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS), graduates of UCEM programmes that are accredited by RICS are permitted to take the Assessment of Professional Competence of HKIS.

UCEM has recently gained accreditation by the Hong Kong Institute of Construction Managers (HKICM) for the following programmes:

- BSc Construction Management
- BSc Building Surveying
- BSc Quantity Surveying
- MSc Building Surveying
- MSc Quantity Surveying

4. Academic Awards in Apprenticeship Programmes

UCEM offers the following apprenticeship training programmes:

- [Surveying Technician apprenticeship](#)
- [Chartered Surveyor degree apprenticeship](#)

The Surveying Technician apprenticeship is a level 3 (A Level equivalent) apprenticeship that includes the UCEM Surveying Technician Diploma and RICS Associate Assessment (AssocRICS). The UCEM Surveying Technician Diploma is a closed award that is only offered as part of the Surveying Technician apprenticeship programme.

Further information on the Surveying Technician apprenticeship and UCEM's delivery model for this apprenticeship is available at <https://www.ucem.ac.uk/develop-talent-for-your-business/apprenticeships/>

The Chartered Surveyor degree apprenticeship is a level 6 apprenticeship that includes a BSc (Hons) degree and RICS Assessment of Professional Competence (APC). The BSc degree that is included is dependent upon the apprenticeship and APC pathway selected as shown below:

Apprenticeship and APC Pathway	UCEM BSc (Hons) included
Building Surveying	BSc (Hons) Building Surveying
Quantity Surveying and Construction	BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying
Project Management	BSc (Hons) Construction Management
Commercial Property Practice	BSc (Hons) Real Estate Management
Valuation	

With apprenticeship programmes, UCEM BSc (Hons) awards are delivered using a bespoke four-year delivery model. The main module menu is the same as that used for standard BSc (Hons) awards; however, BSc (Hons) awards delivered within apprenticeship programmes include a Work-based Learning Project module (Code) as a replacement for the standard BSc project module. The (Code) module is specifically designed for use within BSc (Hons) awards within apprenticeship programmes and is delivered during Year 3 and Year 4 of the BSc (Hons) in parallel with the core and elective modules, meaning that during this phase of delivery, students will be completing up to three modules simultaneously whilst also undertaking structured training in the workplace for APC.

Further information on the Chartered Surveyor apprenticeship and UCEM's delivery model for this apprenticeship is available at <https://www.ucem.ac.uk/develop-talent-for-your-business/apprenticeships/>

UCEM is working with the Chartered Surveyors Training Trust (CSTT) and Eastleigh College to deliver the Chartered Surveyor Degree Apprenticeship and Surveying Technician Apprenticeship Trailblazer.

See www.cstt.org.uk and www.eastleigh.ac.uk for further information.

5. The Role of External Examiners – Regulation and Guidance

5.1 General appointment procedures

UCEM's Code of Practice for External Examining sets out in detail the criteria for appointment of External Examiners and the principle responsibilities of the role. The Code of Practice should be referred to for all matters relating to the role. The Code of Practice can be accessed via the External Examiner section on the VLE (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12). Please also see the diagrams in appendices A and B.

External Examiners are appointed in accordance with the person specification and criteria set out in the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice. Candidates nominated for appointment are required to complete a Proposal form which, once approved by the Head of Faculty, is put forward for approval by the External Examiner Appointments Sub-committee who report into the Quality Standards and Enhancement Committee (QSEC). External Examiners can be appointed as either a Module/Unit Board External Examiner or a Progression and Award Board External Examiner or both. The Proposal form will indicate which role the nomination is being put forward for. The role appointed will reflect the duties that the External Examiner will be expected to carry out. Upon approval, the appointee is informed of the role approved and is sent a Statement of Appointment to sign and return. The appointee is also provided with the External Examiner Handbook and access to the External Examiner section of the UCEM VLE where a host of resources, information and guidance can be found.

Appointments are usually for a period of 4 years; however:

- in keeping with growing practice throughout the UK higher education sector, all appointments are subject to annual renewal, dependent on the submission of the standard end-of-year report for the previous year;
- by agreement with the External Examiner concerned, the appointment may be extended for a further year in exceptional circumstances. Please see Section 10 of the UCEM Code of Practice for External Examining for possible circumstances.

The Statement of Appointment is renewed annually, following receipt of the final External Examiner Report (see section 5.7).

5.2 External Examiner Induction

As part of the UCEM induction process for External Examiners, the appointed External Examiner is provided with a Statement of Appointment, the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice, the External Examiners Handbook, access to the External Examiner section of the VLE and briefing from UCEM staff. Where UCEM appoints an External Examiner with no previous experience of external examining, UCEM will provide them with a mentor in accordance with the UCEM External Examiner Mentoring guidelines (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12).

Following appointment, UCEM requires all External Examiners to undertake the compulsory induction training, the materials for which are located in the External Examiner area of the VLE. UCEM reserves the right to terminate the appointment in the event of this not being completed within three semesters following its commencement.

5.3 External Examiner Development

The External Examiner section of the VLE is constantly being updated and new information/guidance added. We encourage our External Examiners to visit the VLE on a regular basis to ensure they are kept up to date. We also encourage External Examiners to suggest areas where further information or guidance would be useful and adding to the VLE to aid in their ongoing development. External Examiners will be invited to attend the UCEM Annual Conference.

5.4 Scrutiny of draft assessment material

Every element of assessment that leads to an award, at all levels, is subject to External Examiner scrutiny. As part of the role, External Examiners are expected to scrutinise the full range of assessments including both examinations and coursework assignments. Internally, scrutiny of assessment material is carried out by way of Scrutiny Boards with Programme and Module/Unit Leaders in attendance along with the relevant Head of Faculty and support staff from assessment team.

External Examiners are not expected to attend the Scrutiny Boards but may do so if they wish to, either in person or via teleconference. However, External Examiners are usually given access to the draft assessments in advance of the scheduled Scrutiny Board and are required to provide written comments ahead of the meeting. Scrutiny of assessment materials must be carried out in accordance with the set criteria detailed within the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice (section 5.2).

The most up-to-date module/unit descriptors, programme specifications and programme regulations can be accessed via the External Examiner section of the VLE and must be referred to when carrying out scrutiny of assessment materials. Assessment material must be presented in a way which is clear and easily understood. Regard must be given to the Learning Outcomes of each module/unit and the External Examiner must satisfy themselves that the tasks are inclusive in relation to equality and diversity, enable the students to meet these intended Learning Outcomes and are appropriate to the module/unit descriptor. The tasks must also provide the students with the opportunity to perform at a standard comparable with students on similar programmes inside and outside of UCEM, and allow them to be fairly assessed.

The Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference can be accessed via the External Examiner section of the VLE (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12).

5.5 Module/Unit Board

External Examiners are required to attend the relevant Module/Unit Board for the programme they are responsible for. The Module/Unit Board dates are advised well in advance (see list of Board dates on External Examiner area on VLE). Meeting invites are sent via Microsoft Outlook meeting request approximately 2-3 months ahead of the Board meeting direct to the email address that the External Examiner has provided. The External Examiner is expected to respond to the meeting request advising of attendance or non-attendance.

External Examiners are also invited to attend UCEM the day prior to the Module/Unit Board to review a sample of students' coursework, final assessment scripts and other related documentation. A list of the information that is provided to External Examiners to enable them to complete their review can be found in the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice (section 9.1).

The Module/Unit Board is attended by the appropriate Module Leaders, Programme Leaders, Head of Faculty and support staff from the assessment team. The External

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Examiner is expected to actively participate in the Module/Unit Board to review the performance of students on a module-by-module or unit-by-unit basis. They are also required to comment on the standard of work produced by the students and approve, by way of signing off, the Module/Unit Board Record of Module/Unit Results recording the Board's decisions. The decisions of the Module/Unit Board are final other than in exceptional circumstances.

Should an External Examiner feel unable to endorse the decision of the Board for whatever reason, they are required to submit a report to the Chair of the Board. Alternatively, any concerns or issues which an External Examiner feels unable to report to the Chair of the Board can be reported directly to the UCEM Principal detailing the reasons.

Module Boards are held twice a year for each programme and External Examiners are normally required to attend both Boards. Unit Boards are held once per year. Expenses relating to the attendance at Module/Unit Boards can be found in the Fees and Expenses section later in this Handbook.

The Module/Unit Board Terms of Reference can be accessed via the External Examiner section of the VLE (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12).

5.6 Progression and Award Board

External Examiners who have been appointed as Progression and Award Board Examiners are required to attend Module/Unit Boards and Progression and Award Boards. The Progression and Award Board usually takes place approximately one week after the related Module/Unit Board. The Board dates are scheduled well in advance and can be found on the External Examiner section of the VLE. As with the Module/Unit Board, External Examiners will be formally invited to attend the Board by way of a meeting request via Microsoft Outlook. The External Examiner is expected to respond to the meeting request to advise of attendance or non-attendance.

External Examiners that were unable to attend Module/Unit Board are invited to attend UCEM on the morning of the Progression and Award Board to review relevant documentation. A list of the information that is provided to External Examiners to enable them to complete their review can be found in the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice (section 9.2).

The Progression and Award Board is attended by the relevant Programme Leaders, Head of Faculty and support staff from the assessment team. The External Examiner is expected to actively participate in the Progression and Award Board to review and make recommendations on the progression of individual students taking into account each student's marks as agreed by the Module/Unit Board. They are also required to ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a comparable level to other similar awards. External Examiners will be required to approve and sign off the Progression and Award Board paperwork as a true recording of the Board's decisions. Should an External Examiner feel unable to endorse the decision of the Board for whatever reason, they are required to submit a report to the Chair of the Board. Alternatively, any concerns or issues which an External Examiner feels unable to report to the Chair of the Board can be reported directly to the UCEM Principal detailing the reasons.

For programmes at levels 4 to 7, progression and Award Boards are held twice a year for each programme and External Examiners who have been appointed as Progression and Award Board External Examiners are normally required to attend both Boards. For programmes at level 3, Progression and Award Boards are held once a year. Expenses relating to the attendance at Progression and Award Boards can be found in the Fees and Expenses section later in this Handbook.

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The Progression and Award Board Terms of Reference can be accessed via the External Examiner section of the VLE (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12).

5.7 External Examiner's Reports

5.7.1 Final Annual Report

Following each meeting of the Progression and Award Board the External Examiner is required to submit a written report to UCEM by the date specified. The report must be submitted using the report template provided which can be accessed via the External Examiner section of the VLE (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12).

The External Examiner report template is divided into sections to cover:

- Academic standards
- Assessment process
- Student performance
- Module/Unit Board
- Progression and Award Board
- Enhancement of Quality
- General information
- Quantitative summary

The External Examiner is expected to comment on all the areas listed above and submit a completed signed report within one month of the Progression and Award Board. There is a section within the report for External Examiners who are at the end of their tenure to provide an overview of their experience of being a UCEM External Examiner and to give any feedback or comments regarding the development or progress of programmes they have covered. Further details regarding the External Examiner Annual reports can be found in the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice.

The report may be submitted either hard copy or electronically. If submitting the report electronically, please bear in mind the report must be signed, either an electronic signature or a scanned copy of a signed report is acceptable. Hard copy reports should be sent marked for the attention of the Head of Assessment at the address given under the Who to Contact section of this Handbook. Electronic submissions should be sent to exams@ucem.ac.uk.

Upon receipt of the External Examiner report, the Head of Assessment will check the report for completion and forward to the relevant Programme Leader for an official response. The Programme Leader will provide a response, using a standard UCEM proforma. The response will include any actions required to issues raised within the External Examiner's report. The response is then discussed with the relevant Head of Faculty before being signed off by both the Programme Leader and Head of Faculty. The Programme Leader will also provide a covering letter to accompany the report response highlighting any specific issues or actions. The response along with the covering letter is then sent electronically to the relevant External Examiner.

5.7.2 Interim Report

In addition to the main report provide at the end of each academic year, a brief interim report is required from External Examiners to UCEM's Higher Education programmes at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7 following the first semester Progression and Award Board of each year, using the proforma provided for the purpose.

This report essentially is a 'tick box' document that will serve as mid-year feedback to the programme team and administration. It will not be posted to the VLE, shared with students or validating bodies, or presented to the Board of Studies. No formal response will be provided routinely, but the Head of Assessment or the relevant Head of Faculty / Programme Leader / Module Leader may contact the External Examiner to discuss any aspect of the content if appropriate to do so.

The Interim Report template can be found on the External Examiner area of the VLE.

5.7.3 Action taken by UCEM

UCEM places great importance on the contribution made by External Examiners to the maintenance of academic and quality standards. The feedback given within the report will be considered during the Annual Programme Review process and will help the relevant Programme Leaders to judge whether the programme is meeting its stated objectives, if it is still relevant and up-to-date and where necessary where improvements can be made.

5.7.4 Availability of Reports

The External Examiner reports are made available to all UCEM staff and students via the VLE and are sent to validating bodies on request. Once the latest reports have been responded to, they are also placed on the External Examiner section of the VLE.

5.8 Matters of Serious Concern

Should an External Examiner wish to express any serious concerns or issues, which cannot be included with the annual report, they should do so in writing to the UCEM Principal. Likewise, should an External Examiner wish to raise a complaint about anything they feel has adversely affected their ability to carry out their role of External Examiner they should write to the Principal. A template is available within the External Examiner Report pro-forma for such purpose. The template can be detached from the report for the purpose of reporting to the Principal or alternatively the External Examiner can write directly to the Principal.

In addition to the above, External Examiners may raise matters of serious concern or complaints with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The concerns procedure can be found via the QAA website (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12).

5.9 Other External Examiner Duties

External Examiners may be asked to perform other occasional duties, for example, to advise the Award and Progression Board on prizes to be awarded to outstanding students, to participate in exceptional viva voce examinations or to be consulted with regard to proposed changes to programmes or modules/units for which they are responsible. Further details of other duties can be found in the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice.

5.10 Conflicts of Interest

External Examiners must declare to UCEM any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest that may arise during their appointment. External Examiners must declare any such conflict to the Head of Assessment as soon as it is known. Declaration of any conflict of interest will be asked for at the start of all Module/Unit Boards and Award and Progression Boards. Further details on conflicts of interest can be found in the UCEM (External Examining) Code of Practice.

5.11 Mitigating Circumstances

Students with mitigating circumstances submit their claim along with the relevant evidence to the Mitigating Circumstances Committee. Recommendations from the Mitigating Circumstances Committee are presented at the relevant Module/Unit Board and/or Award and Result Board for consideration. To ensure confidentiality of such mitigating circumstances the exact nature will not normally be discussed at the Board unless the Mitigating Circumstances Committee was unable to reach a decision due to lack of evidence, or the need to consider the student's performance as a whole rather than at modular level. The policy for Submission and Approval of Mitigating Circumstance are available on the Student Services section of the VLE or on request. Please also refer to section 5 of the Board of Examiners Code of Practice for the remit of the Boards regarding mitigating circumstances.

5.12 Fees and Expenses

External Examiners are paid a standard annual fee for carrying out:

- their duties, including scrutinising draft assessments, writing the full Annual Report and attendance at the Module/Unit Board;
- a further fee is payable for attending the Award and Results Boards.

The standard annual fee is payable upon receipt of the External Examiner's full annual report; this fee does not apply to the mid-year interim report submitted. **If an annual report is not submitted no fee will be paid.**

External Examiners must submit an invoice stating:

- the programme and academic year and the fee that is being claimed, within **one calendar month** of the date of the Award and Progression board for the programme;
- any expenses incurred for payment.

This invoice must be submitted to the Head of Assessment for authorisation.

An up-to-date fee schedule, along with the UCEM expenses claim form, can be found on the External Examiner area of the VLE (see link in the section on Policies and other useful documents on page 12).

A one-off Supplier Account Set Up form will need to be completed to set up an account for each External Examiner on the UCEM finance system in order that fees and expenses can be paid. This form can also be accessed via the External Examiner section of the VLE.

For details regarding current arrangements for expenses payments, please see appendix C.

6. Policies and other useful documents

Links to UCEM VLE, policies and other useful documents

[External Examiners VLE](#)

[UCEM External Examiners list 2016](#)

[UCEM Code of Practice](#)

[UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Chapter B7: External Examining](#)

[Higher Education Academy \(HEA\) Resources for External Examiners](#)

[The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies](#)

[UCEM Policies](#)

[Programme Specifications and Regulations](#)

[Key Dates of Boards](#)

[Board of Examiners Code of Practice](#)

[Module/Unit Board Terms of Reference](#)

[Progression and Award Board Terms of Reference](#)

[External Examiner's Report Template](#)

[External Examiner's Interim Report Template](#)

[External Examiner Mentoring Guidelines](#)

[Previous External Examiner Reports](#)

[Expenses Claim Form](#)

[QAA Concerns Procedure](#)

[QAA Subject Benchmark Statements](#)

[Mentoring Guidelines – External Examiners](#)

7. Who to contact

For enquiries regarding:

- External Examiner appointments
- External Examiner reports
- Claims for fees and/or expenses
- The External Examiner VLE
- Dates for Unit/Module Boards and Progression and Award Boards
- This Handbook

Please contact:

Sharon Gault at: s.d.gault@ucem.ac.uk

For enquiries regarding:

- Examination papers / assessments
- Scrutiny/review of assessments
- Programme related matters including programme regulations and Module/Unit Boards and Progression and Award Boards
- Pre Board External Examiner reviews

Please contact the relevant Assessment / Examinations Officer:

Montanna Harden

Assessment Officer (Undergraduate Programmes)

Email: m.harden@ucem.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)118 921 4614

Gina Columbine

Assessment Officer (Postgraduate Programmes)

Email: g.columbine@ucem.ac.uk

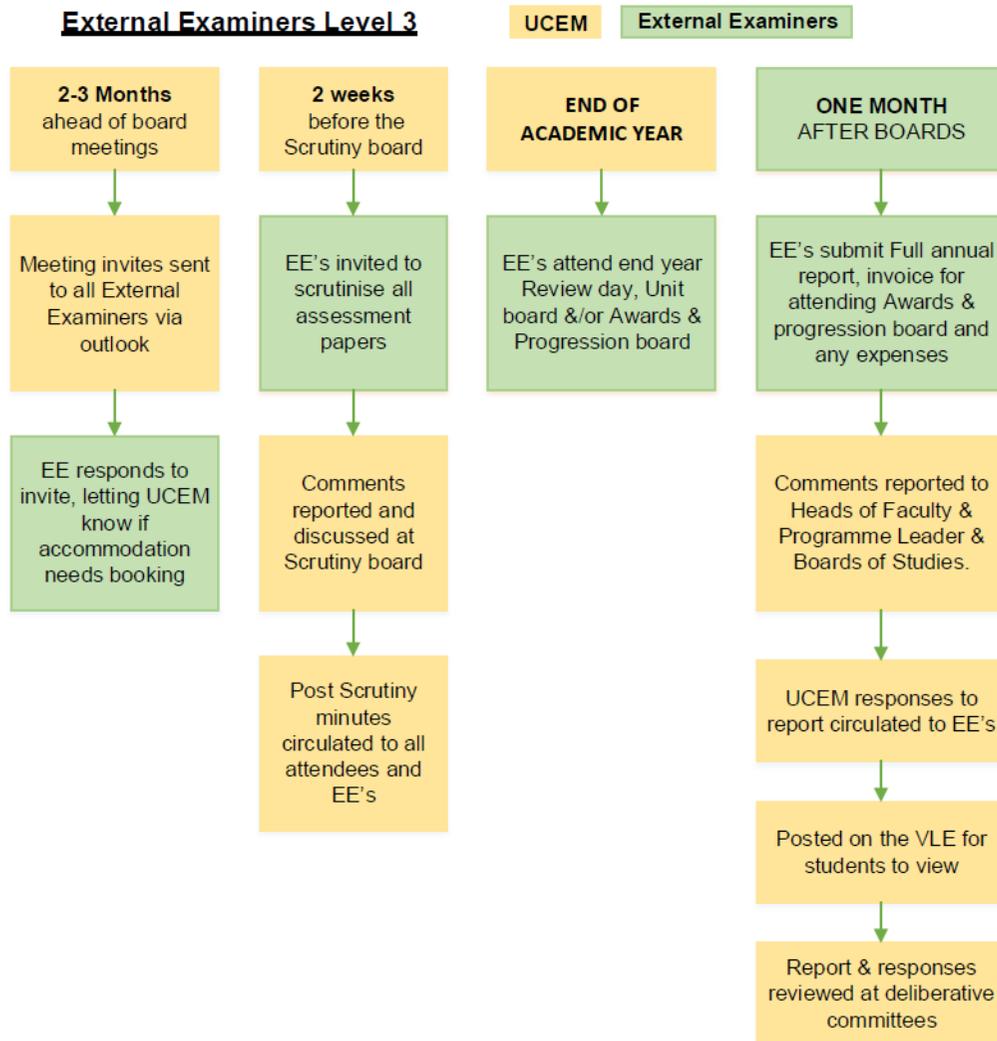
Tel: +44 (0)118 921 4769

For Enquiries regarding:

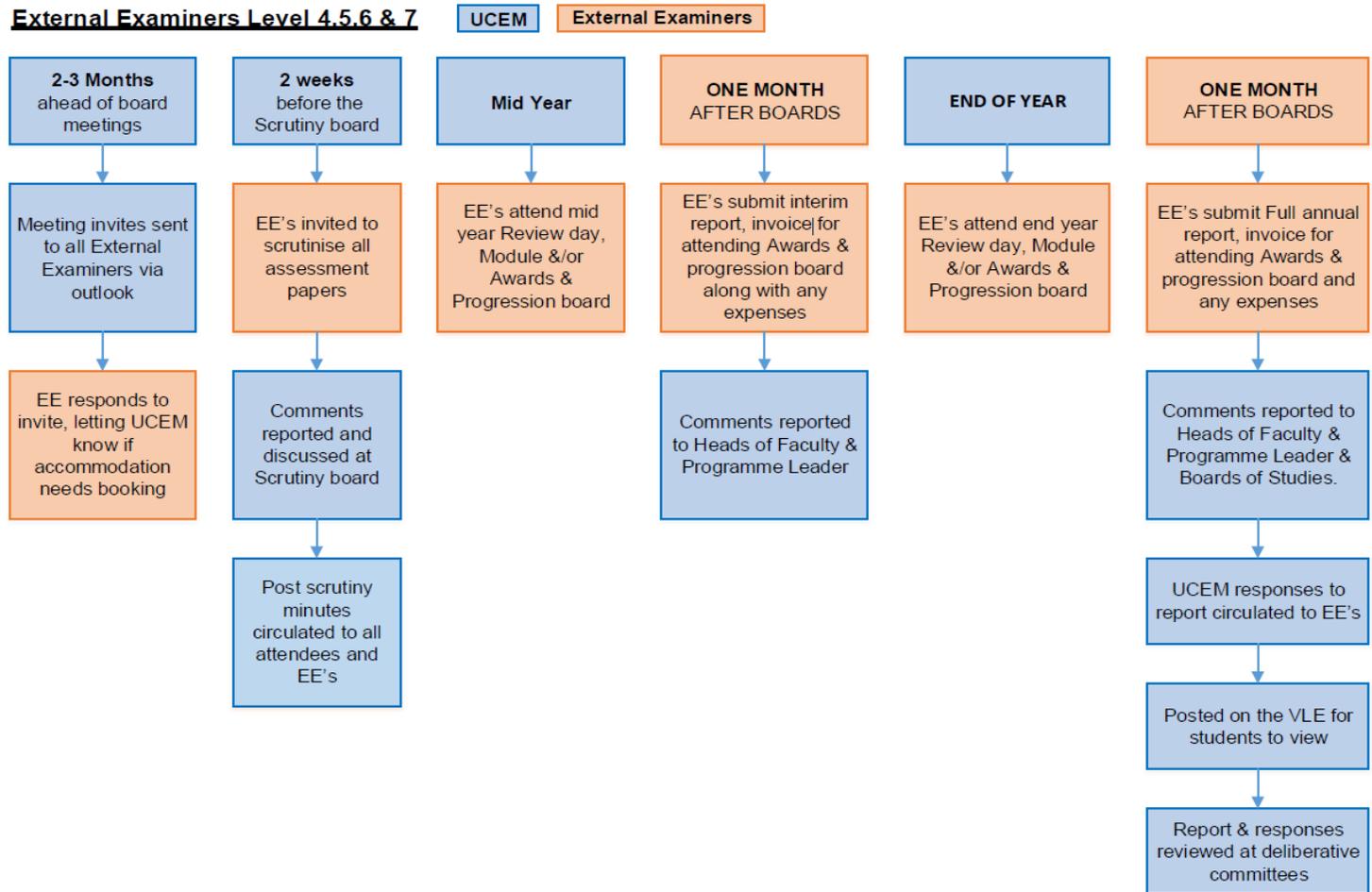
- Practical arrangements for attending Boards / visiting UCEM
- Agenda's and timings for Boards

Please contact Team Admin on exams@ucem.ac.uk

Appendix A External Examiner Process (level 3)



Appendix B External Examiner Process (levels 4 to 7)



Appendix C Payment of Fees and Expenses

UCEM will pay all reasonable travelling expenses relating to attendance at Unit/Module Boards and Progression and Award Boards. In order to comply with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), all expenses claims must be supported by receipts in order for claims to be paid. Mileage claims do not require receipts.

UCEM will reimburse standard class rail travel for attendance at Unit/Module Boards and Progression and Award Boards. If first class tickets are purchased only the equivalent standard class rail fare will be reimbursed. If you chose to drive where rail travel is available and possible and your journey is over 30 miles, UCEM will reimburse the equivalent of a standard class rail ticket.

Where reasonable public transport facilities do not exist, or a substantial saving in time could be effected, a car allowance may be claimed. Mileage rates will be paid in accordance with the HMRC approved Mileage Allowance Payment rates. External Examiners should ensure that their insurance covers the use of their car on UCEM business and should only carry passengers if the policy permits.

Should External Examiners require overnight accommodation UCEM will bear the cost of room and breakfast in a 'reasonable quality hotel'. UCEM defines a 'reasonable quality hotel' as being one of at least 3 star UK standard. The following rates are considered reasonable:

The following rates are correct for 2017/18:

- London hotel - £120 per night excluding breakfast
- Other UK hotel - £100 per night excluding breakfast

Please note: The above details on expenses are subject to change by the finance department and External Examiners will be notified of any such amendments.