



College Policy

Boards of Examiners (and their appointment, membership and authority) for The Open University Awards (2025-26)

25th July 2025



Senior Leadership Responsibility	Adam Fahey - Deputy Chief Executive - Curriculum and Quality
Policy Author	Matthew Twitchett - Executive Director Quality, Teaching and Learning.
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	Executive Director Quality, Teaching and Learning.
Issue date of current version	18-9-24 (25-26 V1)
Date to be reviewed	August 2026
Type of Policy	Public

Significant changes following review of strategy

Page Number or Heading Name	Details of significant change	Changes made by
N/A	No changes as a result of review	Matthew Twitchett

This policy has been approved by The Open University through its Institutional and administrative revalidation complete in June 2023.

This policy is available in alternative formats including word upon request to accommodate different needs. To request an alternative format, please contact HE support at HESupport@southessex.ac.uk

Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	25-7-25
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Matthew Twitchett
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Executive Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	Students and Staff employed
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	This is a yearly review and update required by awarding organisations

You will need to consider whether it's possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy /procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with one being lowest impact and 5 being the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age	1	None identified		
Disability	1	Some students may need support in understanding the policy. This will be provided by the student support teams in the College.	Students with an identified disability can seek support from a Carer/Parent or Guardian and the College.	As and when required
Gender (Sex)	1	None identified		
Gender Reassignment	1	None identified		
Marriage or Civil Partnership	1	None identified		
Pregnancy / Maternity	1	None Identified.		
Race	1	None identified		
Religion or Religious Belief	1			
Sexual Orientation	1	None identified		
Any other element that needs to be considered.	1	None identified		

Note:

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved.

South Essex College Group

Introduction

This policy and guidelines relate to students studying for The Open University awards at South Essex College.

1.0 Appointment of Boards of Examiners

- 1.1 For every programme leading to a validated award of The Open University ("The OU") there is a Board of Examiners whose constitution (including a note of those members constituting a quorum) and terms of reference will have been approved by The Open University.
- 1.2 External Examiners are appointed by, and report to The Open University. The terms under which they engage with the College and the programmes to which they are appointed are those determined by The Open University.

2.0 Membership of Boards of Examiners

- 2.1 All External Examiner(s) for the programme are members of the board. Under no circumstances may a College student of The Open University or student studying for an award of The Open University be a member of, or attend, a Board of Examiners. (A person who is otherwise qualified to be an internal examiner for a programme, for example as a member of academic staff or as an approved External Examiner, and is coincidentally registered as a student on another programme either at the same institution or elsewhere, will not be disqualified from carrying out normal examining commitments.)
- 2.2 The Chair of the Board of Examiners will be a senior member of staff, namely the Executive Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning, who is not directly involved in the delivery of the programme or the assessment of students in the programme considered by the Board of Examiners. The Chair of the Board of Examiners cannot be a member or involved in any student complaints or appeals process or procedures. A member of staff from the relevant department where The OU provision resides will be appointed as a Secretary to the Board of Examiners. The chair of the Board of Examiners cannot be the chair of the Extenuating Panel.

2.3 A member of The Open University staff must be present at any Examination Board where decisions about progression and final recommendations for an Open University award are made. (Although not normal practice The Open University reserves the right to Chair the Board of Examiners or any subsidiary boards.)

2.4 The Registrar (or equivalent) or a nominee at the partner institution – acting with the authority of the Academic Board – should normally be appointed as Secretary to the Board of Examiners.

2.5 Membership of the Boards of Examiners will be as follows:

Board position	Role title
Chair	Executive Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning.
Secretary	HE - Examinations & Assessment Officer or nominated alternative
External Examiner (PgCE, Cert. Ed.)	External Examiner
A member of management staff from the relevant department where The OU provision resides	Deputy Executive Director, Teaching & Technology
Other attendees	ITE Programme Leader ITE and Learning Resource Manager The Open University Quality & Partnerships Manager Academic Reviewer

2.6 The main Examination Board will take place in July with an additional resit examination Board taking place in September. In exceptional circumstance and in agreement with The Open University additional Examination Boards can be held.

3.0 Authority of Boards of Examiners

- 3.1 The Board of Examiners is authorised to determine the progression of students in accordance with these academic regulations and to recommend progression or the conferment of validated awards of The Open University.
- 3.2 All progression and award recommendations are made to The Open University's Module Results Approval and Qualifications Classification Panel (MRAQCP) for them to ratify. The Panel is responsible for approving recommendations for module results and the award and Classification of qualifications validated by The Open University.
- 3.3 All decisions related to a student's progression, final results, and awards, will be considered by a properly constituted Board of Examiners.
- 3.4 No other body has authority to recommend conferment of an award or progression, nor to amend the decision of an approved and properly constituted Board of Examiners acting within its terms of reference and in accordance with the regulations for the programme of study. A Board of Examiners may, however, be required to review a decision, or may have that decision annulled under the Appeals procedure.
- 3.5 All students progression and award recommendations will be presented to the board regardless of the financial status of the individual students.

4.0 Conditions of conferment by The Open University

- 4.1 The OU may approve conferment of a validated award when the following conditions are satisfied:
- (a) The student has been a registered student at the College at the time of the assessment for an award and the appropriate fee to The Open University has been paid by the College.

- (b) Details of the student's full name, full postal address, email address, telephone numbers, date of birth, gender, programme of study, award and all required information have been forwarded to The Open University.
- (c) The institution at which the student has been registered has confirmed that the student has completed a programme of study approved by The Open University as leading to the award being recommended.
- (d) The award has been recommended by a Board of Examiners convened, constituted and acting under regulations approved by The Open University and including all members appointed by The Open University as External Examiners for the programme.
- (e) The recommendation of the award has been signed by the Chair of the Board of Examiners, the External Examiners and The Open University's representative at the Board of Examiners, confirming that the assessments have been carried out in accordance with the requirements of The Open University and that the recommendations have received the written approval of the External Examiners.

End of Policy

