



University of Essex

# **External Examiner Report Portal**

## **Department Staff User Guide**

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# Introduction

The [External Examiner Report Portal](#) is an online system which will enable you to electronically monitor and store the annual reports submitted by the External Examiners in your department. It additionally provides a means for departmental staff to write and store responses to the feedback from your External Examiner team.

This guidance is designed for department users to help walk you through some of the system basics, although our team is on hand if you have any queries.

## Accessing the Report Portal

Requests for new departmental users to be provided access to the [Report Portal](#) should be submitted to [external.examiners@essex.ac.uk](mailto:external.examiners@essex.ac.uk), who will update the **External Examiners Report Administrators (ee-ra)** delegated mailing list to provide access. Requests to be removed from the access list should also be directed to [external.examiners@essex.ac.uk](mailto:external.examiners@essex.ac.uk).

Logging in to the Report Portal is via your internet browser and requires your University of Essex login credentials.

## Contact and help

If you have any questions or require further assistance, you can contact the Quality and Academic Development Team (QUAD) via email [external.examiners@essex.ac.uk](mailto:external.examiners@essex.ac.uk) or via telephone (01206 87 3944).

# Viewing reports

Once you have logged into the Report Portal, you can search for available External Examiner reports. The website will limit access to reports from within your Faculty/Department on the basis of your log-in credentials.

You can search for the report/s you wish to view by selecting the academic year being reported upon, and the report type (i.e. undergraduate, interim or final postgraduate taught) from the dropdown menus and clicking **search**.



## External Examiner Report Portal

**Report search**

Faculty	Department	Academic year
Social Sciences	Government	2024/25
Status	Report status	Report type
All	All	All

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The report portal holds reports from 2016/17 to provide easy access to reports from previous academic years. Please note that there is no plan to backload reports which pre-date 2016/17.

Once you have clicked search, a list of reports fitting your search parameters will be provided.

- The **status** of an External Examiner refers to whether they are currently in post or not. A *live* External Examiner is still appointed and has a live Essex login. A *replaced* External Examiner has finished in post and their Essex login has been deactivated.
- There are three primary **report types**: undergraduate, pgrad taught, and interim.
- The **report status** indicates where in the submission/review process the report has reached.
  - A *pending* report is with the External Examiner themselves for submission. It may be a draft report which has not yet been submitted, or a previous submission returned to the Examiner for amendments.
  - A report *awaiting report check* is with the Quality and Academic Development team for review. QUAD check the report to ensure all questions have been answered, to triage any particularly problematic feedback, and to ensure that reports are sufficiently anonymised so as to be suitable for sharing with staff and student bodies.
  - A report which is *awaiting department check* either has a query or issue requiring the department's input (and QUAD will usually contact a member of the department to clarify or discuss the particular report) or may require further work later in the year by the External Examiner. For example, an External Examiner with responsibility for both October and January start courses may make their first submission relating to the October cohort earlier than comments on the January cohort, and so the report will be made available to the department for review but will also remain editable for the Examiner.
  - A report which is marked as *complete* has been checked and approved by QUAD, is locked for editing, and is available for the department to add their formal departmental response.
  - An *interim* report is the short mid-year report submitted by postgraduate taught External Examiners following attendance of an interim board (in addition to the final awards board of the year), or where there are other issues to report between annual reports.

## External Examiner Report Portal

**Report search**

Faculty	Department	Academic year
Science & Health	Life Sciences (School of)	2023/24
Status	Report status	Report type
All	All	All

Existing external examiners for selected faculty and department  
Number of records: 4

Name	Status	Report type	Report status	Last updated	Select
Prof	LIVE	UNDERGRADUATE	AWAITING REPORT CHECK	29/10/2024	<input type="radio"/>
Dr	LIVE	UNDERGRADUATE	COMPLETE	13/08/2024	<input type="radio"/>
Prof	LIVE	UNDERGRADUATE	COMPLETE	25/07/2024	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Dr	LIVE	INTERIM	COMPLETE	03/07/2024	<input type="radio"/>

What action would you like to take?

- Department Response
- Print Report
- Process Report**
- View Report

Select a report and choose an action from the dropdown menu.

- **Department Response.** This option allows you to add your formal departmental response to the report, as detailed in the following section.
- **Print Report.** This provides your report in a print-compatible format. Instructions on how to export External Examiner reports are provided in the following section.
- **Process Report.** This option allows you to comment upon or approve reports sent to you for preliminary review.
- **View Report.** Select this option if you only wish to review a report in your web browser, and take no additional action.

Not all actions are available for all report statuses. For example, departments cannot add a response to a report unless the status is 'complete' or cannot process a report unless the status is 'awaiting department check'. If the action you have selected is unavailable, you will receive the following error message.

### 'Function not allowed for user/status'

If this message appears, you will need to select a different option to progress.

For each report there are four tabs providing different information.

- The first tab is the **report** itself.
- The second tab contains a text box for departments to enter their **department response**.

### Report details

Faculty: **Social Sciences** Department: **Essex Business School** Action: **View Report**

### External examiner details

Title	Surname	Other names	PRID	Institution	Status	Academic year	Report type	Report status
Dr				Norumbria University	LIVE	2023/24	UG	COMPLETE

<b>Report</b>	Department response	Summary	Schedule
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- The third tab provides a **summary** of all action taken on a report, for example when it was first submitted or sent to the department, a record of any queries or issues logged to the Report Portal, or when the department response was added.

Report	Department response	<b>Summary</b>	Schedule
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Summary of actions taken on report:

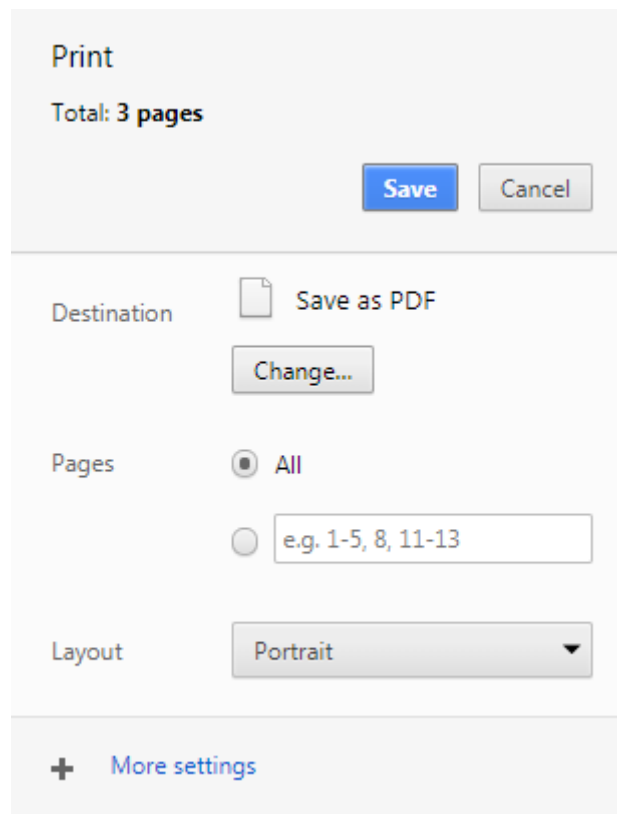
Date	Person	Activity	Decision	Information
19/10/2020 16:49		DEPARTMENT RESPONSE		
19/10/2020 16:48		DEPARTMENT RESPONSE		
27/07/2020 12:45		REPORT CHECK	Decision Report Accepted	
27/07/2020 12:45		REPORT SUBMITTED		
22/07/2020 16:35		REPORT CHECK	Decision More Work Required	Revision requested via email.
22/07/2020 16:34		DEPARTMENT CHECK	Decision More Work Required	Revision requested via email.
08/07/2020 10:06		REPORT CHECK	Decision Department Check	Please see email for information.
26/06/2020 16:46		REPORT SUBMITTED		

- The fourth tab provides an External Examiner's **schedule** of awards/modules. Departmental staff can also access complete lists of External Examiner schedules via the below Sharepoint reports.
  - [All current programmes with associated External Examiners \(including unallocated programmes\)](#)
  - [All current modules with associated External Examiners \(including unallocated modules\)](#)
  - [Schedules of all current External Examiners by department](#)

## Printing reports

If you need to extract the submitted report from the Portal as a PDF file or as a hard copy, select the action **Print Report**.

This will bring up a printable page summarising the External Examiner's schedule and displaying their full report. To print the report, click **CTRL+P** or select **Print** from the taskbar of your Internet browser and send the report to the relevant printer. To save the report, change the print destination to **Save as PDF** (Google Chrome) or the equivalent for your browser.



NB The example screen above is from Google Chrome. For advice on saving the page as a PDF from different browsers, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#).



## Writing your departmental response

Departments should discuss External Examiner reports at a team level and make a considered and timely response to each External Examiner. The response should outline any action to be taken (or the reason why there will be no action if this is the case) in response to External Examiners' recommendations.

The department response can be entered directly to the Report Portal. Once the response has been completed and the user has clicked **submit**, an automated notification message will be sent to the External Examiner to inform them the response is available for their review.

Report	<b>Department response</b>	Summary	Schedule
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**PART D: Department Response**

**A reply should be sent to the External Examiner in response to their report. This should refer to actions taken and explain the reasons where it's been decided no action will be taken. Please add your responses below, or attach a copy if sent separately.**

Responses to External Examiners should be made in a timely fashion. Please be aware that, as External Examiners who have ended their contracts with us have their Essex logins closed off and no longer have access to the Report Portal, responses for outgoing Examiners should be added as soon as possible following receipt of their report.

## Queries and issues with reports

As well as viewing the report and providing a departmental response, you may receive a request from Quality and Academic Development to check a report, for example if departmental feedback was sought prior to Quality and Academic Development processing the report. In these instances, you will receive an automated email asking you to check the relevant report.

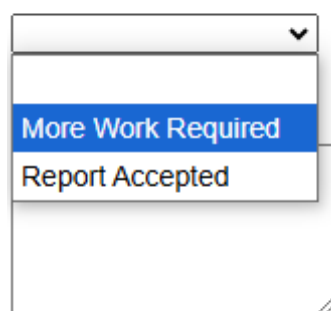
Decision More Work Required	When we were alerted to the issues raised in July our Director of Assessment made contact and we responded to his concerns.
Decision Department Check	EE highlights some information which has not been received. Can this be discussed with the EE and resolved as appropriate?

QUAD will summarise their query within the Report Portal. This is accessible via the **summary tab** and is provided in the text of the automated request for the department to check the report. If the query is particularly complicated or sensitive, QUAD may also follow up with a separate email to clarify any issues.

Once the department has reviewed the report and is confirm the approach QUAD or department should take to address any issues, they can return the report to QUAD for action. To do so, department users should select the relevant report, choose the action **process report** from the initial dropdown menu, click **next**, and then register their decision from the subsequent dropdown menu.

### Department check

Check decision



A screenshot of a web interface showing a dropdown menu. The menu is open, displaying two options: 'More Work Required' (highlighted in blue) and 'Report Accepted'. The dropdown is positioned below the text 'Check decision'.

Cancel

The department can propose that the External Examiner should amend certain sections of their report by choosing **More Work Required**, or indicate they are satisfied with the initial submission by selecting **Report Accepted**. Before clicking **Submit** to register the decision, departments should provide a brief rationale for their decision in the *Further Information* text box.

# Useful Links

- ▶ [Criteria for nomination](#)
- ▶ [External Examiner nomination guidance](#)
- ▶ [Email QUAD](#)
- ▶ [External Examiner roles and responsibilities](#)
- ▶ [Preparation for the External Examiner role](#)
- ▶ [External Examiner expenses claim form](#)
- ▶ [ESIS report: all current programmes with associated External Examiners \(including unallocated programmes\)](#)
- ▶ [ESIS report: all current modules with associated External Examiners \(including unallocated modules\)](#)
- ▶ [ESIS report: schedules of all current External Examiners by department](#)
- ▶ [External Examiner Report Portal](#)

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