



Higher Education Board of Examiners

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1. Introduction

The primary purpose of the Board of Examiners at Ada, The National College for Digital Skills is to ensure that academic standards are maintained in accordance with the regulations of The Open University (OU) and Ada's internal policies. The Board makes final decisions on student and apprentice progression, assessment, and awards.

The Board of Examiners operates on the following core principles:

- **Fairness and Consistency:** All students and apprentices are treated equitably, and assessment regulations are applied consistently.
- **Integrity and Rigour:** The Board acts with academic integrity to assure the standards of all awards conferred.
- **Transparency:** The procedures and decisions of the Board are clear, well-documented, and defensible.
- **Externality:** The involvement of External Examiners is integral to guaranteeing and calibrating national academic standards.

2. Authority and Constitution

The Board of Examiners is constituted with the authority of Ada's Academic Board and operates under the regulations of the validating partner, The Open University.

The decisions made by the Programme Board of Examiners are final and are not subject to alteration by any other body within Ada. Any appeal against the Board's decisions must be made through Ada's formal Academic Appeals Procedure.

3. Types of Examination Boards

Ada operates a tiered system of examination boards to ensure robust scrutiny at all levels.

Module Examination Board

- Purpose: To review and confirm the final marks for individual modules after the completion of all marking and moderation processes as defined in the Verification, Marking and Moderation Policy.
- Frequency: Held at the end of each assessment period for the relevant modules.
- Output: Confirmed module marks are formally minuted and passed to the Programme Examination Board for consideration of student progression and awards.

Programme Examination Board

- Purpose: To make summative decisions regarding the progression of students and apprentices, the conferment of awards, and the classification of those awards.
- Frequency: Held at the end of each academic year/stage of a programme.
- Scope: Considers the full academic profile of each student/apprentice, considering the confirmed marks from all constituent Module Boards.

Reassessment Board

- Purpose: To consider the results of students and apprentices who have undertaken reassessment opportunities granted by the Programme Board of

Examiners.

- Frequency: Held following the reassessment period.
- Output: Makes final decisions on progression or awards for the students/apprentices presented.

4. Membership

The standard membership for a Programme Board of Examiners shall be:

- **Chair:** The Director of Apprenticeships, or another senior academic nominee who has not been involved in the teaching or assessment of the students/apprentices under consideration.
- **Secretary:** A member of the Apprenticeship Operations Team
- **Internal Members:**
 - Head of Faculty
 - HE Quality and Standards Lead
 - Programme Leader
 - Module Leaders for the constituent modules of the programme.
- **External Examiner(s):** The External Examiner(s) assigned to the programme by Ada in agreement with The Open University. The presence of the External Examiner is essential for the conferment of awards.
- **Validating Partner Representative:** A representative from The Open University (e.g., Senior Quality & Partnerships Manager).

5. Quorum

A Programme Board of Examiners is quorate when the following members are present:

- The Chair (or a formally approved deputy).
- The External Examiner(s) (or their formally recorded written consent to the

proceedings for non-award-bearing boards).

- Validating Partner Representative
- The Programme Leader.
- The Secretary.

6. Functions and Powers of the Programme Examination Board

The Programme Examination Board is empowered to:

- Ratify the marks and grades for all modules contributing to a programme, ensuring that marking and moderation procedures have been properly conducted.
- Make decisions on the progression of each student/apprentice to the next stage of their programme.
- Determine the eligibility of each student/apprentice for an award.
- Classify awards in accordance with The Open University's regulations.
- Consider cases of extenuating circumstances that have been submitted and verified through Ada's official procedure and determine the appropriate course of action.
- In cases of failure, determine whether a student/apprentice is eligible for reassessment opportunities or is required to withdraw from the programme.
- Consider any reported academic misconduct and apply penalties as specified in the Academic Misconduct Policy
- Provide commentary on the management and conduct of assessment and make recommendations for enhancement to the Programme Team and Academic Board.

7. Conduct of the Board of Examiners

Agenda and Documentation

The Secretary will circulate the following documentation to all members at least three working days before the meeting:

- The agenda for the meeting.
- Minutes from the previous Programme Board meeting.
- Confirmed minutes from all contributing Module Boards.
- The full schedule of student/apprentice results presented anonymously.
- Relevant programme and module statistics.
- The External Examiner's report from the previous year and the response provided.
- A summary of verified extenuating circumstances cases for consideration.
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Presentation of Student/Apprentice Results

The Programme Leader will present an overview of the cohort's performance before individual profiles are considered. Specific cohorts or individuals will be highlighted for discussion, including:

- All students/apprentices eligible for an award including exit awards
- All students/apprentices in a position of failure.
- All students/apprentices with approved extenuating circumstances.
- Any borderline cases as defined by the programme regulations.
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Decision Making

Decisions are made by the collective academic judgement of the Board. The External Examiner's view is particularly important in ensuring standards are comparable to those across the sector. Where a consensus cannot be reached, the Chair will facilitate a vote. The Chair holds the casting vote in the event of a tie.

Chair's Action

Chair's Action may be used to approve straightforward decisions between meetings (e.g., confirming a grade after an administrative error is corrected). All instances of Chair's Action must be formally documented and reported for ratification at the next scheduled Board of Examiners meeting.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All proceedings, discussions, and documentation relating to the Board of Examiners are strictly confidential. Individual student/apprentice performance must not be discussed outside the meeting. All documentation must be handled in accordance with GDPR and Ada's Data Protection Policy.

9. Minutes and Record Keeping

The Secretary is responsible for producing accurate and detailed minutes of the meeting, recording all key decisions, the rationale behind them, and any actions arising.

A draft of the minutes will be circulated to the Chair and the External Examiner for approval of accuracy before wider circulation.

The final, approved minutes serve as the official record of the Board's decisions. These records are securely stored by the Academic Administration office. A formal results list is published to students/apprentices following the ratification of the minutes.