



## EXTERNAL EXAM POLICY (FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS)

**Policy number:**  
AP-GE 6

**Policy group:**  
Grading and Examinations

**Effective:**  
12/02/2024

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### PURPOSE

This policy outlines the procedures and criteria for the appointment of external examiners for final year medical students at the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE). The role of external examiners is crucial in ensuring the quality and fairness of the assessment process and the maintenance of academic standards. This policy is designed to ensure the appointment of qualified and impartial external examiners for final year medical students at UGHE. The process will be carried out transparently, and the role of external examiners is essential in maintaining the high academic standards and quality of assessments within the school.

### DEFINITIONS

**External Examiner at the School of Medicine:** An external examiner (EE) is an independent academic or healthcare educator from outside UGHE who is appointed to assess the examination papers, practical assessments, and other assessment components for final year medical students. External examiners play a vital role in validating the assessment process, providing feedback, and ensuring that the standards of the assessments are appropriate and consistent.

### PROCEDURE

#### **Appointment Procedure**

**Nomination:** The Dean of the School of Medicine at UGHE or his/her designee will initiate the process of appointing external examiners. Each department or specialty within the School of Medicine will nominate potential external examiners based on their expertise and experience in the relevant field. They may contact the Head of Departments at selected universities of good repute and ask for Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of possible candidates they recommend to act as external examiners in their respective field. This should be done as early in the academic year as possible.

**Selection:** A Selection Committee comprising representatives from relevant departments chairs convened by the division of clinical education chair will be responsible for reviewing nominations, evaluating candidates, and making recommendations for appointments. Each Department shall be allowed a maximum of two external examiners in one exam sitting. The recommended external examiners will be endorsed by the Dean of the School of Medicine, who will send them invitations.

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**Eligibility Criteria:**

External examiners must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a senior academic position in the relevant field.
- Must have at least 3 years of experience in setting/marking examinations at a university level.
- Must be an active or honorary teaching faculty at a well-recognized medical school at the level of the candidates whose exam they will be evaluating.
- Possess expertise and experience commensurate with the assessments they will be evaluating.
- Have no conflicts of interest with UGHE.
- Be available during the 4 months prior to the examination to be fully involved in the assessment process from beginning to end. They are to remain available until the last assessment with which they are to be associated in order to deal with any subsequent review of decisions.

**Appointment:** The final appointment of external examiners will be made by the Dean of UGHE after considering the recommendations of the Selection Committee. The external examiners appointment shall be for 3 consecutive years. The School of Medicine will ensure that it is able to recruit and retain suitable individuals to maintain the effectiveness of the examining process. Renewal of appointments will be determined by the School Council under the guidance and leadership of the Chairperson.

**Annual Review:** The performance of external examiners will be subject to an annual review by the Dean or his/her designee.

**Termination of appointment:** The appointment of an external examiner may be terminated before the expiry of his/her normal term by dean of the School of Medicine.

**Contractual guidelines:**

- The School of Medicine, through the Finance office, shall meet its financial obligations to the external examiner. The amount of honorarium payable to each category of external examiners (those from outside Rwanda, from within) shall be at the discretion of the school of medicine and commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the appointment.



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- The school of medicine shall meet all travel expenses to and from Kigali. Air travel shall be economy class.
- The school of medicine shall meet accommodation and meals expenses for the duration of the External Examiner's visit which shall not exceed 7 days except under extenuating circumstances
- Upon submission of an External Examiner's report, honoraria shall be paid.

### RESPONSIBILITY

#### **Role and Responsibilities of External Examiners**

##### **Assessment:**

- External examiners are responsible for reviewing examination papers, practical assessments, and other assessment components for final year medical students, including but shall not be limited to, the standard of the examination questions, the structure of the examination, the marking scheme and allocation of marks per question asked, module outlines, syllabi etc. They will provide feedback on the content, structure, and appropriateness of the assessments. They will diligently ensure that:
  - The syllabus for the course being assessed has been covered by examination questions.
  - The examinations set are up to the standard required. The examiner must judge the award standard impartially based on work submitted for assessment, without being influenced by previous associations with the program/ module, staff, or any of the students.
  - The time allocated to the examination paper is adequate and within the required examination standards.
  - The solutions and marking scheme provided are of high standard.
  - The External Examiner is able to compare the academic standards of the School of Medicine with those of courses leading to comparable awards elsewhere.

**Standardization:** External examiners will ensure that the assessments align with established academic standards and that the grading process is fair, transparent, and consistent.

**Feedback:** External examiners will provide constructive feedback to the relevant faculty and departments to help enhance the quality of assessments and teaching.



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**Attendance:** External examiners may be invited to attend examination board meetings and other relevant meetings as observers to provide their expert input.

**Report Submission:**

- External examiners are required to submit a report detailing their findings, recommendations, and observations to the Dean of UGHE (see template below). The purpose of the report is to enable the School of Medicine to judge whether the program is meeting its stated objectives and to make necessary improvements either immediately or at the next review sitting as determined by school council. The School of Medicine shall provide written guidance on the content of reports by external examiners (see template below). The external examiners are also expected to provide a more comprehensive narrative report of his/her observations geared towards areas of strength and weaknesses in the overall teaching, learning and assessment process.

This report will include a commentary and judgments on the validity, reliability, and integrity of the assessment process and the standards of student achievement/performance. The external examiners will submit this comprehensive report no later than two weeks from the last day of completing the evaluation of assessment exercise. At the end of the three-year term of office, the report shall be extended to cover the entire examination period. The report will be submitted directly to the Dean of the School of Medicine with copies sent to the chair of the division of clinical education and appropriate head of department.

**Review of the report:** Departments will be responsible for ensuring that within a month of the receipt of the report, the external examiners are provided with a response to their comments and recommendations, including information on a detailed consideration of their reports, and an indication of any action taken or to be taken as a result of the report, or clear reasons for not accepting any recommendations or suggestions.

The external examiners have the authority to report directly to the Dean of the School of Medicine at any time if there is concern over standards of assessment and performance, particularly where they consider that assessments are being conducted in a way that jeopardizes either the fair treatment of individual students or the standard of the University's awards.

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External examiners must declare any potential conflicts of interest, including personal, financial, or professional relationships with UGHE staff or students. Conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with the school's conflict of interest policy.

**Annex 1: Report template – External Examiner - Exit Exam for Final year Medical Students**

External Examiner's Report

Exam Information:

Date: [Date of the Exam]

Location: [Location of the Exam]

Course/Subject: [Name of the Course/Subject]

Level: Exit Medical School Exam

**Introduction:**

I, [External Examiner's Name], appointed as the external examiner for the Exit Medical School Exam conducted at UGHE on [Date of the Exam], hereby present my report.

**Executive Summary:**

This report offers a comprehensive assessment of the Exit Medical School Exam conducted by UGHE. It includes an evaluation of various aspects, such as the examination process, question quality, assessment methods, and overall observations made during the examination.

**Examination Process:**

**Organization and Administration:** Assess the efficiency and fairness of the examination administration, including candidate registration, examination room setup, invigilation procedures, and adherence to examination regulations.

**Timeliness:** Evaluate the punctuality of the exam commencement, duration, and submission of the papers.

**Security Measures:** Review measures taken to maintain the integrity and security of the examination papers and procedures.

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**Question Quality:****Relevance:** Assess the relevance of the questions to the course/subject being examined.**Difficulty Level:** Evaluate the appropriateness of the questions concerning the targeted level of competency expected from the candidates.**Variety:** Comment on the diversity of question types (e.g., multiple-choice, essay, practical) used to assess the candidates' understanding and knowledge.**Assessment Methods:****Fairness:** Evaluate the fairness of the assessment methods in measuring the candidates' knowledge and skills.**Validity and Reliability:** Review the validity and reliability of the assessment tools used to ensure accurate evaluation of candidate performance.**Feedback Mechanism:** Assess the provision of constructive feedback to candidates after the examination.**Overall Observations and Recommendations:****Strengths:** Highlight notable strengths observed during the examination process.**Areas for Improvement:** Identify specific areas that require enhancement or modification for future exams.**Recommendations:** Provide actionable recommendations to improve the overall examination process and its effectiveness.**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, this report aims to provide constructive feedback and recommendations based on my observations as an external examiner during the Exit Medical School Exam. I commend the efforts made by UGHE in conducting this examination and offer recommendations to further enhance the examination process in the future.

**REVISION/REPLACING**

This policy shall be subject to review in **five** years (12/02/2029).



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### EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

This policy shall come into effect on the date of its approval by the Academic Commission of the University of Global Health Equity.

**Approved by:**

**Date: 07/11/2024**

*Abebe Bekele*



**Professor Abebe Bekele, MD, FCS, FACS, MAMSE**

Professor of Surgery

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs and Research

Dean, School of Medicine and Health Sciences

UGHE