

School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology

Role of External Examiner

We discussed the role of the External Examiner at school and departmental level and the overriding shared issues are as follows:

1. We value the role of the EE as 'critical friend', see the process as that which secures trust in our academic assessment and inter institutional and international oversight, as well as being part of academic culture and the identity of the TCD degree.
2. Our EEs look at (as second marker almost) all of our SS dissertations in the period coming up to exams (there are no SS essays for the most part) and inspect all the examination papers (and essays if they are part of an assessment) when they arrive in Dublin for the Courts. They also read the examination papers of the JS students and have sampled JS essays at times. They also review all of our papers in advance of examinations for all JS and SS papers.

They have requested that we move towards some school moderation of marks in advance of their assessment and we are in the process this year of doing that for the Senior years in relation to essays and dissertations. We feel that there is too little time in the summer exam process for marks moderation of examination papers (apart from the EE and the Court of Examiners, which is itself a moderation process).

3. We have had very positive evaluations of our programmes (teaching, learning, content, delivery) at UG level from the EEs and have always responded to the EE requests or suggestions for innovations, for example, structured supports for learning. In the recent quality review for AHSS we reported on innovations prompted by the EEs, e.g. for the last three years we have held dissertation seminars for our SS student and see a great development in research learning and in outcomes in terms of grades for these students.