



QAA

AdvanceHE

Protecting the value of HE qualifications in the UK: degree classification and external examining

Conference programme

Date: 22 May 2019
Time: 10.30-15.45
Location: The Great Hall, King's College London, Strand Campus, WC2R 2LS

Programme

10.00-10.30 Registration and light refreshments

10.30-10.35 **Welcome**
Alison Johns, CEO, Advance HE

10.35-11.00 **'Protecting the value of degree standards: the work of the UK Standing Committee on Quality Assessment'** (Chair: Alison Johns, CEO, Advance HE)

Cliona O'Neill, Head of Student Experience, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, and a member of UKSCQA.

11.00-11.50 **Degree Standards: Degree Classification** (Chair: Alex Bols, Deputy Chief Executive of GuildHE)

This presentation and workshop will explore the background to degree classification and grade inflation, with facilitated discussion on how the proposals in the recent UKSCQA consultation may affect institutions and providers.

Dr Charlotte Snelling, Policy Researcher, Universities UK;
Alex Bols, Deputy Chief Executive of GuildHE;
Simon Bullock, Development Officer, QAA.

11.50-12.00 Break

12.00-12.45 **Degree Standards: External Examining project** (Chair: Erica Morris, Academic Associate, Advance HE)

This session will show how the professional development course for external examiners has been devised with the sector and is being rolled out across the UK. It will explore how far a strengthened external examining system can contribute to ensuring that degrees do not lose their value over time. It will involve presentations and a Q & A session.

Professor Sue Bloxham, Emeritus Professor of Academic Practice,
University of Cumbria;
Professor Margaret Price, Professor Emerita Assessment and Learning,
Oxford Brookes University;
Dr Frank Haddleton, Director of Academic Quality, University of
Hertfordshire.

12.45-13.30 Lunch

13.30-14.30 **Calibrating academic standards** (Chair: Simon Bullock, Development
Officer, QAA)

*This session will explore the potential of calibration to contribute to ensuring
greater comparability of degree standards. It will involve presentations from
professional bodies on the experience of running calibration exercises with
external examiners in their disciplines and the potential ways forward.*

Professor Chris Rust, Professor Emeritus, Oxford Brookes University;

Geography

Dr Stephanie Wyse, Professional and Policy Manager at the Royal
Geographical Society;

Dr Jennifer Hill, Associate Professor: Geography & Environmental
Management, University of the West of England, Bristol;

Music

Dr Michelle Phillips, Assistant Head of Undergraduate Programmes, Royal
Northern College of Music;

Chemistry

Professor David M. Smith, University Education Director, University of
Bristol;

Law

Jackie Panter, Associate Head, Manchester Law School, Manchester
Metropolitan University.

14.30-15.30 **The response of stakeholders** (Chair: Dr Geoff Stoakes, Special Adviser
(Degree Standards), Advance HE)

*This session will explore stakeholder perspectives on the challenges of, and
opportunities involved in, protecting the value of degree qualification. It will
involve presentations and a panel Q&A session.*

Institution

Dr Ben Calvert, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Student
Experience) University of South Wales;

Professor Jane Powell, Vice-Provost Education, University of Surrey;

Employer

Stephen Isherwood, Chief Executive, Institute of Student Employers;

Student

Aaron Lowman, Director of Academic Services at the Academy of Live and
Recorded Arts and representative of the QAA Student Advisory Committee

15.30-15.45 **Closing remarks** Dr Geoff Stoakes, Special Adviser (Degree Standards)
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