

KENYA STANDARD

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ICS ##.###

Second Edition

**Academic quality assurance — University
education — Part 4: External examining —
Requirements and guidelines**

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

The following organizations were represented on the Technical Committee:

Ministry of Education
Commission for University Education
Kenya National Qualification Authority
Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
University of Nairobi
Kenyatta University
Maseno University
Kirinyaga University
Karatina University
Machakos University
Embu University
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REVISION OF KENYA STANDARDS

In order to keep abreast of progress in industry, Kenya Standards shall be regularly reviewed. Suggestions for improvements to published standards, addressed to the Managing Director, Kenya Bureau of Standards, are welcome.

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Academic quality assurance — University education — Part 4: External examining — Requirements and guidelines

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Foreword

This Kenya Standard was prepared by the University Education Services Technical Committee under the guidance of the Standards Projects Committee, and it is in accordance with the procedures of the Kenya Bureau of Standards.

Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) has established Technical Committees (TCs) mandated to develop Kenya Standards (KS). The Committees are composed of representatives from the public and private sector organizations in Kenya.

Kenya Standards are developed through Technical Committees that are representative of key stakeholders including government, academia, consumer groups, private sector and other interested parties. Draft Kenya Standards are circulated to stakeholders through the KEBS website and notifications to World Trade Organization (WTO). The comments received are discussed and incorporated before finalization of the standards, in accordance with the Procedures for Development of Kenya Standards.

This standard forms Part 7 of the KS 2368 series on Academic quality assurance — University education. The series addresses various components of academic quality management within university education

Kenya Standards are subject to review, to keep pace with technological advances. Users of the Kenya Standards are therefore expected to ensure that they always have the latest versions of the standards they are implementing.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (KS 2368-4: 2013), which has been technically revised.

The text of the standard has been revised to reflect current best practices in educational external examining.

KS 2368 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Academic quality assurance — University education*:

- *Part 1: Programme design, approval, monitoring and review*
- *Part 2: Student assessment*
- *Part 3: Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters*
- *Part 4: External examining*
- *Part 5: Postgraduate research programmes*
- *Part 6: Collaborative provision and distance learning*
- *Part 7: Work-based and placement learning*
- *Part 8: Career education, information and guidance*
- *Part 9: Students with disabilities*
- *Part 10: Admissions to university education*

During the preparation of this standard, reference was made to the following document (s):

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), U.K, 2024

The Universities Act, Cap 210

Universities Regulations 2014

Universities Standards and Guidelines 2014

Kenya National Qualifications Framework, Act Cap 214

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Act, 2012

UNESCO International Classification of Education and Training 2013 (ISCED 2013)

African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance 2013 (ASG-QA)

Competency Based Education and Training Policy Framework

Report of Presidential Working Party on Education Reform

National Skills Development Policy 2023
Presidential Working Party in Education Report 2023
Industrial Training Act

Acknowledgement is hereby made for the assistance derived from this (these) source (s).

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Introduction

0.1 Background

External examining is a fundamental mechanism for safeguarding academic standards and ensuring comparability of awards across universities. It provides an independent and objective means of verifying that assessment processes are rigorous, fair, and aligned with intended learning outcomes.

The external examining system contributes to public confidence in university qualifications by enabling independent scrutiny of student achievement, assessment design, grading standards and institutional regulations. It also facilitates benchmarking across institutions and disciplines.

0.2 Purpose

This Kenya Standard specifies requirements and provides guidelines for the nomination, appointment, preparation, engagement and reporting of external examiners in university education. It establishes a structured framework to ensure that:

- academic standards of awards are maintained at appropriate levels;
- assessment processes are valid, reliable and equitable;
- student performance is judged consistently;
- external examiner reports contribute to institutional quality enhancement.

0.3 Application

This standard applies to all universities and constituent colleges offering academic awards at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

- It applies to:
- institutional governing bodies;
- senates and academic boards;
- faculties, schools and departments;
- quality assurance units;
- examination and assessment boards; and
- appointed external examiners.

Academic quality assurance — University education — Part 4: External examining — Requirements and guidelines

1 Scope

This Kenya Standard specifies requirements and provides guidelines for the external examining system in university education.

It covers:

- principles and functions of external examining;
- nomination and appointment procedures;
- roles and responsibilities;
- preparation and support of external examiners;
- conduct of external examining activities;
- reporting and institutional response;
- monitoring and continuous improvement.

This standard complements applicable legislation and institutional regulations.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

KS 2217-6, Glossary of terms used in the education sector — Part 6: University education

KS 2368-2, Academic quality assurance — University education — Part 2: Student assessment, Requirements and guidelines

KS 2368-6, Academic quality assurance — University education — Part 6: Collaborative provision and distance learning, Requirements and guidelines

KS 2368-1, Academic quality assurance — University education — Part 1: Programme design, approval, monitoring and review

KS ISO 21001, Educational organizations — Management systems — Requirements with guidance for use

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in [KS 2217-6, Glossary of terms used in the education sector — Part 6: University education] and the following apply.

3.1 external examiner

independent academic or professional appointed to provide impartial oversight of academic standards and assessment processes

3.2

internal examiner

academic staff member responsible for teaching and assessment within the institution

3.3

moderation

process of reviewing assessment decisions to ensure consistency and fairness

3.4

assessment board

formal body responsible for confirming student results and progression decisions

4 Principles

External examining shall be guided by the following principles:

- a) independence and objectivity;
- b) transparency and accountability;
- c) academic integrity;
- d) fairness and equity;
- e) comparability of standards;
- f) evidence-based judgement;
- g) continuous improvement.

5 Core functions of external examining

Institutions shall ensure that external examining enables independent verification that:

- a) Academic standards of awards are set and maintained at appropriate levels.
- b) Assessment processes measure achievement against intended learning outcomes.
- c) Student performance is judged consistently and fairly.
- d) Institutional assessment regulations are applied correctly.
- e) Standards are comparable with those of similar institutions.

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Institutional responsibilities

The institution shall:

- a) define the authority and remit of external examiners;
- b) communicate roles clearly to staff and students;

- c) provide access to necessary documentation;
- d) ensure independence of judgement;
- e) maintain records of appointments and reports.

6.2 Responsibilities of external examiners

External examiners shall:

- a) review assessment instruments;
- b) sample assessed work;
- c) attend relevant assessment boards;
- d) confirm fairness of assessment processes;
- e) submit written reports within agreed timelines.

6.3 Endorsement of results

Prior to confirmation of final results, institutions shall require external examiners to endorse assessment outcomes for programmes within their remit.

7 Nomination and appointment

7.1 Selection criteria

Institutions shall appoint external examiners who:

- a) possess appropriate academic and/or professional expertise;
- b) demonstrate objectivity and integrity;
- c) are not in conflict of interest;
- d) have sufficient experience relevant to the subject area.

7.2 Appointment procedures

Institutions shall establish documented procedures for:

- a) nomination;
- b) approval;
- c) formal appointment;
- d) duration of tenure;
- e) renewal or termination of appointment.

A formal letter of appointment shall define:

- scope of responsibilities;
- period of appointment;

- reporting requirements;
- confidentiality obligations.

7.3 Conflict of interest

Institutions shall establish procedures to identify and manage conflicts of interest prior to appointment and throughout tenure.

8 Preparation and support

8.1 Induction

Institutions shall ensure that newly appointed external examiners receive appropriate induction.

8.2 Information provision

External examiners shall be provided with:

- a) programme specifications;
- b) intended learning outcomes;
- c) marking schemes;
- d) classification criteria;
- e) institutional regulations;
- f) previous external examiner reports (where applicable).

8.3 Ongoing support

Institutions shall provide updates on policy changes affecting assessment.

9 Conduct of external examining

9.1 Scope of appointment

Institutions shall clearly specify the programmes or components covered by each external examiner.

9.2 Access to evidence

External examiners shall have access to:

- a) examination papers;
- b) coursework and scripts;
- c) moderation records;
- d) assessment board minutes.

9.3 Engagement with stakeholders

Institutions shall define whether and how external examiners may meet students or academic staff.

10 External examiner reports

10.1 Submission of reports

External examiners shall submit written reports at agreed intervals.

10.2 Content of reports

Reports shall include commentary on:

- a) academic standards achieved;
- b) fairness and rigor of assessment;
- c) comparability of standards;
- d) strengths and areas for improvement;
- e) actions taken in response to previous reports.

For postgraduate research programmes, reports shall clearly indicate recommendations regarding award decisions.

10.3 Confidential reporting

Institutions shall provide mechanisms for raising matters of particular concern confidentially.

11 Institutional consideration of reports

11.1 Review process

Institutions shall ensure reports are:

- a) received centrally;
- b) reviewed at departmental and institutional levels;
- c) formally recorded.

11.2 Action and follow-up

Institutions shall:

- a) document actions taken;
- b) monitor implementation;
- c) incorporate lessons learned into quality enhancement processes.

11.3 Thematic analysis

Institutions shall periodically analyse recurring themes across reports to inform systemic improvement.

12 Feedback to external examiners

Institutions shall provide external examiners with:

- a) acknowledgement of receipt of report;
- b) a formal written response;
- c) details of actions taken;
- d) justification where recommendations are not adopted.

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Annex A
(informative)

Structure of external examiner report template

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Annex B
(informative)

Minimum content of placement assessment rubric

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Bibliography

- Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), UK Code of Practice

- Universities Act
- Policy Frameworks for Education and Training in Kenya

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- 1] KS ISO 21001, Educational organizations — Management systems — Requirements with guidance for use
- [2] Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), UK Code of Practice
- [3] Universities Act (current edition)
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