

## DAU 3-6 External Reviewing policy

Policy Code	Policy Name		
DAU 3-6	External Reviewing policy		
Responsible Executive	Current Revision Date	Next Revision Date	
-Academic Program Development Committee (APDC) at the department and College levels -DAU's Teaching and Learning Unit -DAU's Quality Assurance Directorate -Colleges' Quality Assurance Units -DAU's College Councils -Academic Department Councils	10/2023	10/2027	

### 1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide a systematic and periodical framework to evaluate the academic programs within the university and to suggest new strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of academic programs as well as to guide the development of new academic programs on a continuous basis.

### 2. Policy Scope

This policy governs all DAU's academic programs, both undergraduate and graduate, in all colleges.

### 3. Policy Statement

An external program review is conducted on a regular basis. The Head of the Department should designate an external academic reviewer who is an expert in the field, and then the Department Council and the College Council will review the outcomes and decisions.

### 4. Policy Procedure

*The external reviewer* is a local or international higher education specialist who serves as an impartial advisor to the academic program in his field of competence. He/she should be nominated from outside of the university or from a foreign university.

*The objectives of External Reviewer:* External reviewers are expected to undertake and achieve the following:

- Auditing, assessing, and suggesting developments or areas for improvement in terms of the quality of the academic program under review.
- Evaluating the program's contexts and contents in line with national and international standards of quality to provide comprehensive feedback.
- Identifying the program's strengths and opportunities for improvement related to the labor market trends, curriculum, learning and teaching, program management, and the resources used.
- Providing critical evaluations to ensure the objectivity of the program review process; also, to determine the program's performance compared to other programs both nationally and internationally.

*The External Reviewer Nomination:* The Department Council and the Academic Program Development Committee (APDC) at the Department level should choose and nominate an external reviewer for the program.

### Nomination Criteria

**A. Required Criteria:** The following qualifications must be criteria for assigning an external reviewer who shall:

- Be a faculty member of a recognized academic institution with expertise in the same or a related field.
- Have a rank equivalent to or higher than Associate Professor.

- Have the requisite time and motivation to carry out the obligations following the timetable agreed upon and established by Dar Al Uloom University.
- Have appropriate academic knowledge and skills and, where appropriate, other professional experience, regarding the relevant subject area being assessed.
- Have significant academic knowledge and abilities, as well as other professional experience, in the relevant subject area being examined.
- Have current or recent academic experience (within the previous five years), including teaching experience, particularly in the same field of study as the topic under consideration.

**B. Desirable Criteria:** The following qualifications are extra qualities that may be utilized to support some of the core essential requirements for an external reviewer:

- Previous experience as an external reviewer.
- Distinguished experience in curriculum development, including the writing of learning outcomes related to students' academic assessment; the development of curricular documents and/or action plans for designing programs; and an awareness of state-of-the-art learning, teaching, and assessment strategies.

For the External Reviewer Nomination, two main forms are used:

- Form ER 1: This form is used for the nomination of the external reviewer. [ER 1 Form.docx](#)
- Form ER 2: The department council uses this form as the foundation for selecting and nominating the external reviewer based on the two primary sets of criteria. The required criteria and the Desirable Criteria. [ER 2 Form.docx](#)

### Conflict-of-Interest Clause

The Reviewer will sign the [External Reviewer Conflict of Declaration Form.docx](#) confirming that no conflict of interest exists or is likely to arise related to the review. Under the declaration, the reviewer must maintain the requirements of confidentiality concerning the review. If during the term of the External Review, a conflict of or risk of conflict of interest arises, the Reviewer should immediately notify the college in writing.

### Reviewer's Prohibition Clause

An external reviewer:

- May not be appointed from an institution under the jurisdiction of Dar Al Uloom University or its departments.
- Should not have undertaken any joint teaching or research with members of staff working in the program/college under review.
- Should not have previously applied for employment in DAU.

### Appointment Process for External Reviewer

Nomination should be submitted to the College Academic Program Development Committee (APDC) and the College Council for consideration and approval. Attachments to the nomination folder should include:

- CV of the nominee.
- Required forms (As mentioned above)
- Suggested schedule of the review process
- Financial cost

### Responsibilities and Duties of External Reviewer

- Reading the self-study report (SSR) carefully and evaluating the narrative and supporting documents for each standard.
- Ensuring the objectivity of the program review process and determining how the program/ curriculum compares to other benchmark programs.
- Providing faculty and administrators with a wider perspective on the program: comments on the content of courses, delivery method and assessment tools.

- Assessing whether the study plans are appropriate, considering several factors such as the current condition of the program, trends in the discipline, the nature of the faculty, and the characteristics of the students and the community the program serves.
- Where modules and programs are delivered at more than one location, the reviewer must consider and advise on the comparability of standards across the locations.
- Checking the relevance of current learning outcomes with industry standards and making sure that they support the mission of the College and University.
- Study plan changes must be carefully considered and for which relevant feedback must be provided.
- Observing facilities and keeping records.
- Ensuring that the department has the resources to deliver the academic program.
- Conducting interviews with the Dean, the Department Chair, and administrative staff. Interviews should also be conducted with students (individually and in groups) regarding their learning experience and their outcomes, satisfaction levels and achievements.
- Considering DAU Values, Mission and Vision Statements, and corresponding statements for colleges. The Reviewer's report is part of a process intended to help guide future decisions about the program under review and should address the most important issues in this context of planning. Concrete suggestions for improvement are expected.
- Providing comments and recommendations on good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching, and assessment and on opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided.
- Submitting a final written report (within six weeks of the site visit) that summarizes the findings and presents the recommended improvement measures. The final report of the external reviewers should be addressed to the Dean of the Unit.

### Materials provided

Materials are normally provided to enable external reviewers to familiarize themselves with the program. In this regard, at least four weeks prior to the visit, the department will provide each external reviewer with a recent copy of the following:

- The Self-Study Report (SSR).
- Program and course specifications.
- Program and course reports.
- The department's strategic plan.
- Program handbook.
- Any other relevant documents.

### Arrangements for the On-Campus Visit

The next phase of the review process involves setting a date for the external review and making the necessary arrangements regarding travel expenses and the schedule of the visit. A contact person must be nominated for communication and coordination purposes. During the visit, the department will also provide any documents, information, or evidence, such as authoritative minutes or examination papers, that the reviewer(s) requests.

#### A. Travel Expenses: The University will cover expenses for the following:

- Visa by HRD.
- Airline tickets.
- Transportation from and to the airport.
- Logistic arrangements (accommodation, internal transport, meals, and additional requests, which are approved on a case-by-case basis).
- The external reviewer will be paid (usually four- or five-days' work, as agreed, excluding the days of travel two days before and two days after the review).
- Reviewers will be reimbursed after the receipt of the final report.

**B. Schedule for External Review Visit:** Activities during the site visit are the following:

- Welcome and brief introductions by the Dean of the College and the Head of the Department.
- Meeting with program faculty members.
- Meeting with students representing all levels of the program.
- Meeting with administrative staff.
- Meetings with other stakeholders (graduates, employers, etc.).
- A tour of some DAU's facilities (classrooms, laboratories, library, etc.)
- Oral feedback meeting with the Dean, program faculty members and administrative staff, before the submission of a formal written review report.
- Closing Meeting with the faculty members and the dean and the vice president of the university.

**Actions Following the Review**

- After the visit or the submission of the review report, if there are any comments from the department regarding the report or visit of the external reviewer(s), the department should provide a feedback report with supporting documents; this should be provided within one week of the visit or the submission of the review report.
- As part of its quality assurance processes, the college/department under review, will be expected to consider the external review report, as well as the reviewers' comments and suggestions, and to take appropriate action through its annual action plans.

**5.Related Policies/ Documents/ Forms**

DAU 3-4 Program specification policy

[ER 1 Form.docx](#)

[ER 2 Form.docx](#)

[External Reviewer Conflict of Declaration Form.docx](#)

**6. Document History**

Version	Issue/ Rev. Date	Updated Information/ Summary of Changes
1	2020	1 <sup>st</sup> issue of the policy
2	10/ 2023	-Procedure for the External Reviewing Processes added -Qualifications of the Academic External review added.