

SECTION 10

APPENDIX (A10.6) EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM – examiners in the final year of their appointment



Durham
University

Durham University
External Examiner Annual Report Form
www.durham.ac.uk/external.examiners/

The University is grateful to its external examiners for their completion in full of this report. The report consists of questions where external examiners are asked to choose from a fixed range of responses, and questions where free text comments are requested. In respect of the latter this form includes a number of prompts for consideration/discussion as 'greyed out' text. These are intended to be suggestive rather than prescriptive, and external examiners are invited to comment on any issue they feel is relevant. To complete the free text questions, please click on the relevant section and you will automatically 'over-type' 'greyed-out' text.

External Examiners should feel free to make any comments they wish, including observations on teaching, module/programme structure and content, and degree schemes as well as assessment procedures. As the reports of external examiners are discussed widely within the University, we should be most grateful if external examiners would ensure that individual staff members or students are not referred to by name in their reports. Reports will normally be available for discussion widely within the University (including with student representatives via staff-student consultative committees), and may also be requested by certain external bodies, including the Quality Assurance Agency. An additional separate and confidential report may be sent to the Vice-Chancellor if the examiner considers this to be appropriate.

In accordance with the practice at most universities, payment of the examiner's fee is conditional upon receipt of satisfactorily completed Annual Report Forms and at the end of term of office of the separate final report. External examiners are requested to submit their forms within 4 weeks of the final meeting of the Board of Examiners.

Note: moderators of undergraduate programmes in Combined Honours and Natural Sciences are asked to complete only the sections of this form which are applicable.

Further information on External Examiner's Report, Fee and Claim forms, and on the External Examining process in general, can be found at <http://www.dur.ac.uk/external.examiners/>

Please email completed report forms to external.examiners@durham.ac.uk

To ensure that you are paid correctly, please enter all of the programme(s) for which you acted as external examiner

Name of External Examiner

[REDACTED]

Academic Year

2012/13

Level of Programmes Examined*

UNDERGRADUATE

Programme(s) Examined

LLB

* external examiners who consider both undergraduate/integrated masters programmes *and* taught postgraduate programmes should complete two report forms

External Examiner's Annual Report Form

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

1:

Delete as appropriate

a	Did you receive University policy and procedures relating to examinations and assessment?	yes
b	Did you receive the external examiners' handbook and/or documentation on the University code of practice on external examining / moderating?	yes
c	Did you receive the relevant core regulations (including university level and qualification descriptors and generic assessment criteria)?	yes
d	Did you receive the relevant degree Programme Regulations?	yes
e	Did you receive the relevant Programme Specification(s) and module outlines from the Department?	yes
f	Did you receive the Programme Assessment Criteria from the Department?	yes
g	Did you receive all the draft examination papers for comment?	yes
h	Was the nature and level of the questions on draft examination papers appropriate?	yes
i	If you had comments on draft examination papers, were these addressed to your satisfaction?	yes
j	Was a sufficient sample of examination scripts made available to you?	yes
k	Was a sufficient sample of assessed coursework made available to you?	yes
l	Was assessed work marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for award of given marks?	yes
k	<p>Please give further details below about any aspects of the issues referred to above. In particular, if you were not satisfied in relation to any of these issues please explain what you felt could be improved, if you found any aspect of this provision especially useful you may wish to give some examples of good practice.</p> <p>I was particularly impressed with the draft land law and trusts and equity papers as they came with a document setting out what the internal examiners were looking for and explaining the general approach to be taken to the marking of the questions. This was very helpful when making comments on the draft paper.</p>	

QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE AWARD

For the questions that follow please use the following scale:

1 (no/hardly at all)

2 (generally)

3 (consistently/fully)

2:

Delete as appropriate

a	To what extent do the aims and objectives (intended learning outcomes) of the programme align with the subject benchmarks?	3
b	To what extent does the design of the curriculum enable the intended learning outcomes of the programme to be met?	3

External Examiner's Annual Report Form

c	Are the standards of the programme consistent with those required by the university qualification descriptors and so with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications?	3
d	Were the academic standards of student work comparable with similar programmes with which you are familiar?	3
e	Do the assessment criteria permit a confident judgement of student achievement against the learning outcomes?	3
f	Was the marking consistent with the assessment criteria?	2
g	Did the assessment policies and procedures appear to you to be appropriate?	3
h	Were the assessment policies and procedures adhered to?	3
i	Was the choice of subjects for dissertations/major projects appropriate?	3

3. Please give further details about any aspects of the programme or its assessment relevant to the topics covered in question 2a-2i above. In particular where you have indicated 1 or 2 on the scale to questions 2a-2i please explain what you felt could be improved; where you have indicated 3 it would be helpful if you could particularly highlight examples of good practice.

As for 2f, my only concern was with the dissertation element. Marks given for the dissertations were generally higher than those given to the students' other papers. This may well be a product of students performing better, given the extra time available for dissertations, so it is not necessarily a cause for concern but it would be useful for statistics to be available recording general performance in dissertation as against other papers.

4. Please comment on the quality of students' work, the quality of the awards made (including the classes for undergraduate degrees and distinction for postgraduate degrees) and comparability with other institutions.

I was generally impressed by the quality of the work. It was notable that none of the students taking the Trusts and Equity module scored a mark of below 40: those teaching the course are to be congratulated on this.

MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

5. Please comment on the management of the assessment process, e.g. the provision of samples of student work, the operation of the Board of Examiners and the level of involvement of the external examiner in the assessment process.

- I was generally impressed with the process. I think the model whereby the external cannot change marks for individual papers but instead takes a view of the general marking of a set of papers is a good one. Some of the internal marking was not finished in time, which gave me less time than expected to complete the external marking and I would hope that this can be prevented in the future. The Board of Examiners meeting was generally well managed, and I was impressed that medical evidence had been systematically handled before the Board itself. There were some issues, however (such as whether consideration of progress onto the year abroad course should be dealt with at the Board) which should have been resolved before the Board itself.
- In relation to only one of the papers I looked at, I did wonder whether the comments of the second marker, made on the form given to candidates, were really adding anything to those of the first marker. It was not clear to me whether it is acceptable for the second marker, as a general practice, simply to write "Agreed" as a comment.

External Examiner's Annual Report Form

PROGRAMME(S) DESIGN AND OPERATION

6. Please add any comments on other aspects of the learning, teaching or assessments of the programme(s). These may include: curriculum design; modes of learning, teaching or assessment; learning resources; links between research and teaching; suitability of the programme as preparation for study at the next level (Masters or PhD as appropriate); suitability of the programme as a preparation for employment; alignment with the requirements of professional bodies (if applicable).

- I was generally impressed by the curriculums and the impact of current research on them. I was somewhat surprised that the Land Law course retains unregistered land as a subject, given that its practical and academic relevance is now minimal.
- I do have a concern about whether students are receiving sufficient instruction in the ethical issues that may arise when carrying out empirical research for a dissertation.

COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

THESE QUESTIONS NEED ONLY BE ANSWERED BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMMES (e.g. articulation agreements, validations, multiple awards, joint awards)

7a. Were you offered sufficient information about the collaborative partnership?

N/A

7b. Did you have the opportunity to compare the achievement of students on the collaborative programme with those of students taught on programmes delivered solely by the University? If YES, were the standards achieved by students on the two types of programme comparable? If NO, do the academic standards achieved by the students indicate that appropriate learning opportunities are being provided through the collaborative partnership?

N/A

GOOD PRACTICE FOR DISSEMINATION

8. Please highlight any examples of good or effective practice that you have identified in the programmes and modules which you examine, that are worthy of particular commendation and wider dissemination within Durham University.

- I was impressed with the handling of medical information and its presentation to the Board of Examiners.
- I was impressed with the useful information about the aims of the draft examination questions and the intended approach to marking provided with the land law and trusts and equity papers.

PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS MADE LAST YEAR

9. If you raised any issues for further consideration or action in your last report, have these been effectively considered by the academic department/school in which you are examining? Have you received a response from the academic department/school indicating the action taken in response to your comments and recommendations? If you raised issues regarding University policy and practice, have you received a response to this from the relevant University faculty?

External Examiner's Annual Report Form

N/A

FURTHER COMMENTS – OPTIONAL

10. If you wish to provide any further comments, in relation to the questions above, or to provide additional information not covered in this form, please feel free to do so in the box below.
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As ever, timing is a crucial issue. Internal examiners need to be aware that if they miss their marking deadlines, this can cause real problems for the externals.
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FINAL OVERVIEW [Please Complete only if this is your final year]

11. At the end of their term of appointment all external examiners are asked to comment on the provision they are responsible for, in relation to their full term of appointment. These comments should relate to the examiner's overall views of issues relating to the quality and standards of the provision for which they are responsible.
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N/A
