

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

2013/14

Level of Programmes Examined*

Undergraduate LLB

Programme(s) Examined

English Legal System; EU Competition Law; European Internal Market and its Citizens; Law of Family Relationships; Dissertations

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

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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>The information provided both before and during the assessment period was extremely clear and the process was very efficiently administered by both academic and support staff.</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

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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?	3
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.

N/A

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.

The sample of work reviewed evidenced thorough and consistent marking and moderation with clear and, in some cases, detailed feedback justifying the marks awarded. I was impressed with how confidently the students had engaged with the academic commentary, case law and primary law and with the clarity of their presentation.

I raised some minor concerns during the moderation process in relation to the first year English legal system/skills module. Whilst overall, most students achieved a pass mark for this, the marks for the first component evidenced a significant proportion of fails. It was suggested that expectations might be too high and that awarding such low marks at this formative stage might be counterproductive. It may be that the marking/assessment needs could be slightly recalibrated to reflect the very early stage of the students' learning and skills. I am grateful to the module co-ordinator for responding so quickly and openly when these concerns were raised.

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 am entirely satisfied with my level of involvement in the entire assessment process. The guidance was very clear and the process efficiently managed. The skeleton answers provided for the assessment questions were very useful indeed.

Externals were given ample opportunity to voice their concerns and any views during the final examination board. The paperwork was very clear and easy to navigate.

I am satisfied that the students were treated equitably and that the internal moderation and

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review protocols were fully adhered to.

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).

N/A - I have not had any input into programme design and operation.

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.

The entire process was extremely well managed, particularly by the Chair of the board of examiners, [REDACTED]. She provided prompt and comprehensive responses to any queries raised, and managed the final Board with great diplomacy and efficiency. Consistent with previous experience, all of the module teams were rigorous and consistent in their assessment.

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?

N/A

FURTHER COMMENTS – OPTIONAL

10. If you wish to provide any further comments, in relation to the questions above, or

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to provide additional information not covered in this form, please feel free to do so in the box below.

I was grateful for the additional guidance provided by the Chair of the Board of examiners as to the nature and scope of the 'systematic review' option, particularly when I raised concerns about the harsh marking on the first year English legal system module. It would be useful to have more practical guidance of this nature at an earlier stage so that externals are clear as to the specific options available to them. Furthermore, it would be useful to receive scripts in good time to allow sufficient time for any recommendations of systematic review to be acted upon. As it stands, the very limited time frame for the assessment/moderation process makes it very difficult indeed (and entirely unreasonable) to expect staff to respond to any recommendations for systematic review.

That issue aside, [REDACTED] should be commended on their management/administration of the entire process and for maintaining open and regular communication with the externals throughout the year.

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.

N/A