

**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/](http://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](mailto: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

<b>Name of External Examiner</b>	
<b>Academic Year</b>	2014/15
<b>Level of Programmes Examined*</b>	<b>POSTGRADUATE or UNDERGRADUATE/INTEGRATED MASTERS</b>
<b>Programme(s) Examined</b>	LLB and LLB Year Abroad

\* 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
m	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.	
	I was satisfied with the assessment documentation, processes and procedures.	

### 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
c	Are the standards of the programme consistent with those required by	3

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	the university qualification descriptors and so with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications?	
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.**

**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 believe the assessment policies and procedures and awards were generally fair and consistent and in line with the standards of comparable institutions. One observation, however, is that over 80% of dissertation marks seem to be in the first or 2.1 classes which does not appear to be in line with other modules. I had no doubts of the high quality, standards and fair marking of the samples of dissertations I saw in any case.

D.R.

### 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.**

The appointment pack I received set out clearly the roles of the external examiner and this was reiterated severally when I received samples of work. My approval was sought for the summative assessment and this allowed another appropriate layer of scrutiny of the assessment. I received samples of assessed work across a good range that enabled me to make comparisons and reach an informed judgment of relevant academic standards. It was really helpful to receive as part of samples of assessed work marking guides to indicate what the examiner expected and the marks and feedback given by the internal marker and moderator. The organisation of the board of examiners' meeting was efficient.

### 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 observed a good range of UG options in the LLB programme that would allow for innovative and research connected teaching. The fact that students could take non-law courses of a certain credit level would help students to demonstrate their interests in areas other than law.

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It would be useful for the Law School to consider the number of 9s in student marks. I saw quite a large number of 9s in second and third year marks. 9s are valid marks but they should be carefully considered where a preponderance rule is being applied.

D.R.

### COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

7. n/a: collaborative provision not considered.

### 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 efficiency of the processes and documentation for the board of examiners and the management by the chair of board of examiners. Examiners were each given a file that arranged candidates and matters in particular cohorts to enable easy comparison. There were also very helpful comparative statistics from previous years. The chair of the board of examiners, [REDACTED] referred to and explained some peculiar conventions of Durham University to external examiners before the meeting. Healthy discussions were allowed to take place during the meeting particularly where the exercise of discretion was involved.

G.P.

### 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?**

Not Applicable: This is my first year as external examiner.

### 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.**

I believe that the SAC aspect of the award discretion does not provide sufficient guidance for the board of examiners to make informed judgments. Although there were good discussions before decisions in those cases it would be helpful to the board of examiners if the Scrutiny Committee that sees the medical and other evidence from affected students is allowed to give an indicative/notional mark to reflect how a student has been affected. Such notional marks allow for more informed judgments by the board of examiners in the exercise of their discretion to give or withhold a class of degree other what the marks profile indicated.

D.R.

**FINAL OVERVIEW [Please Complete only if this is your final year]** Not Applicable

**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.**

This is likely to include the following aspects of quality and standards with which you have been involved:

- the curriculum;
- availability and use of resources;
- the strengths and weaknesses of the student cohorts;

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- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the overall quality of the students' learning experience;
- failure prior to the final Level of the programme for undergraduate programmes and exit at Diploma level for postgraduate programmes;
- the overall standard of student achievement (with reference if appropriate to the entry requirements of the programme).

In addition you may want to comment on the following areas:

- How we might consider developing our teaching, learning and assessment policies and procedures.
- The way in which the department responded to your comments during your period as external examiner and, if not, what could be done to improve this.
- If you were involved in discussion with the department on any of the following:
  - curriculum design
  - modes of teaching and learning
  - modes of assessment
  - advising on a new programme
  - advising on a new module(s)
  - other general issues
- Whether you were satisfied with the way in which the department drew on your expertise.