

**SECTION 6**

**APPENDIX (A6.23) EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S ANNUAL REPORT FORM**



**Durham University**  
**External Examiner's 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 addition to this Annual Report, a more detailed written report is required at the end of an examiner's term of office. The Annual and the Final Reports are important to the University and a crucial part of the academic quality procedures.

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>	2010/11
<b>Level of Programmes Examined*</b>	<b>UG</b>
<b>Programme(s) Examined</b>	Law LLB (Law Gender & Society; Criminal Law; Crime & Social Control; Introduction to International and Comparative Criminal Law; Dissertations)
* external examiners who consider both undergraduate/integrated masters programmes <i>and</i> taught postgraduate programmes should complete two report forms	

## External Examiner's Annual Report Form

### DOCUMENTATION RECEIVED

**1:**

Delete as appropriate

a	Did you receive University policy and procedures relating to examinations and assessment?	<b>Yes</b>
b	Did you receive the external examiners handbook and/or documentation on the University code of practice on external examining / moderating?	<b>Yes</b>
c	Did you receive the relevant core regulations (including university level and qualification descriptors and generic assessment criteria)?	<b>Yes</b>
d	Did you receive the relevant degree Programme Regulations?	<b>Yes</b>
e	Did you receive the relevant Programme Specification(s) from the Department?	<b>Yes</b>
f	Did you receive the Programme Assessment Criteria from the Department?	<b>Yes</b>
g	Please give further details below about any aspects of the documentation received. In particular, if you found any of the documentation insufficiently detailed or informative please explain what you felt could be improved, if you found any documentation especially useful you may wish to give some examples of good practice.	
	Click here and type	

### 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?	<b>3</b>
b	To what extent does the design of the curriculum enable the intended learning outcomes of the programme to be met?	<b>3</b>
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?	<b>3</b>
d	Do the assessment criteria permit a confident judgement of student achievement against the learning outcomes?	<b>3</b>
e	Was the marking consistent with the assessment criteria?	<b>3</b>
f	Did the assessment policies and procedures appear to you to be appropriate?	<b>3</b>
g	Were the assessment policies and procedures adhered to?	<b>3</b>

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

## External Examiner's Annual Report Form

### highlight examples of good practice.

I don't have much to add here. I found the assessments to be appropriately challenging for the subject area and level. I found that the assessments enabled students to demonstrate their ability and thus enabled markers to differentiate appropriately among differing levels of performance. The careful preparation by colleagues of assessments and outline answers/expectations demonstrates a commendable level of planning and strategic thinking.

Last year I noted that markers' feedback could in some cases be more explicit about the reasons for the mark awarded – there was a noticeable improvement in this area this year.

### 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 would like to repeat the comments I made last year about the quality of students' work and the generally high level of performance, as well as the appropriateness of assessments.

Again, I would also note that, although students' work is of a generally high standard, there is a noticeable tendency to use the 1<sup>st</sup> class range of marks more liberally than in other institutions and a readiness to exercise a noticeably wide discretion to award 1<sup>st</sup> class marks overall.

## 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.

Exactly as noted last year, this was all managed very well.

The addition of further information about precedents at the exam board was very helpful.

Although the information provided about the classification of impact of special/medical circumstances is quite detailed, there is scope for clarifying exactly how such classifications are to be taken into account, particular with a view to avoiding 'double counting', for example given the automatic increased weighting given to 3<sup>rd</sup> year results.

## 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 (Master's or PhD as appropriate); suitability of the programme as a preparation for employment; alignment with the requirements of professional bodies (if applicable).

As noted last year, all of the modules I moderated are more than satisfactory in terms of design, approaches, assessment and research linkage. They are sufficiently challenging and exciting to engage and inspire students who may be interested in further study. The most practice-oriented course (Criminal Law) involves an appropriate balance of practical legal skills (problem-oriented legal analysis) and more abstract reasoning skills.

## External Examiner's Annual Report Form

### 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?**

Key issues include:

- were you informed of the respective roles of Durham and its collaborative partner in the programme(s)?
- were you advised of any variations between the programme offered through the collaborative partnership, and the same or similar programmes offered solely by the University?

**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?**

Click here and type

### 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.**

Here I would again repeat the comment I made under this heading last year. Although the guidelines for external examiners make the nature of the role sufficiently clear, it is always useful to receive a covering letter from the course leader(s) that provides a narrative of experience, issues arising, particular concerns (or the absence thereof), and any particular reasoning adopted in the marking process. This year the letter received for Law, Gender and Society was a useful example of this approach. I would not wish to suggest criticism where such a narrative is not provided, but my preference as an external examiner is to engage discursively with course teams and such information is a useful aspect of that dialogue.

### 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 in which you are examining? Have you received a response from the academic department 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?**

As noted above, markers' comments seem to have become more detailed since last year.

### 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.**

Click here and type