

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	██████████
Academic Year	2011/12
Level of Programmes Examined*	Undergraduate
Programme(s) Examined	LLB Law
* external examiners who consider both undergraduate/integrated masters programmes <i>and</i> taught postgraduate programmes should complete two report forms	

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

1:

Delete as appropriate

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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> <p>I was a little surprised to learn that the external examiner has no powers to alter individual marks without scrutinising all of the submitted pieces in respect of any module. This made moderation into something of a rubber-stamping exercise whereby the function of the moderator is more one of ensuring procedural regularity.</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	3

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	learning outcomes of the programme to be met?	
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? Subject to the comment above regarding the role of the external	2
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.

Academic departments/schools are asked to comment on, and respond to, any area where an external examiner has given a 1 or 2 on questions 2a – 2i. Consequently if you are able to explain the reasons why you have given a 1 or 2 response this will be of significant value to the academic department/school in which you are examining.

2 g) Where the full range of marks are used by examiners and where more than one member of a teaching team are marking students' work, there is inevitable scope for some inconsistency between individual marks. One of the functions of the external examiner is surely to identify those instances of inconsistency that may well have slipped through the internal moderation process. This is particularly crucial for marks at the borderline, where a student's mark in one module can determine their entire classification. The added weight attached to the dissertation would also, in my view, reinforce calls for more discretion on the part of the external to amend marks where it is deemed appropriate and defensible.

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.

Key issues are likely to include:

- the general quality of the student work (the knowledge and skills demonstrated) satisfactory;
- the range and scope of assessment, and whether it is appropriate to the curriculum and intended learning outcomes being examined;
- the particular strengths and weaknesses of student performance relation to the intended learning outcomes and the curriculum of the programme(s) under consideration?
- any notable trends or patterns in relation to student progression/distributions of marks/patterns of classification and award;
- the comparability of the academic standards achieved by the students under consideration with those in other institutions that you are familiar with.

The standard of the work was generally very good indeed and it was, on the whole, appropriately and fairly assessed in accordance with the marking descriptors.

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Students, on the whole were critical and rigorous in their assessment of the various topics, drawing on a range of primary and secondary sources. I was particularly impressed with the EU law modules: the standard was excellent and had I had more discretion, would have raised some of the marks. The dissertations were impressive too; well-structured, thoroughly researched and articulately presented.

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.

Key issues are likely to include:

- the extent of your involvement in the approval of work set for the purposes of summative assessment, and whether you believe this was appropriate;
- whether you were able to see an appropriate sample of assessed work, that was sufficient to allow you to reach an informed judgment of the academic standards of the work under consideration;
- the clarity of the information you received about the nature and extent of your duties as external examiner, and of the practical details on the operation of the board(s) of examiners to which you were appointed;
- the clarity and effectiveness of the processes for assuring the quality of assessment (e.g. moderation, double marking, marking to a template/model answer);
- the operation of the board(s) of examiners of which you are a member;
- whether the students under consideration treated equitably in the application of the University's assessment regulations and policies.

I am entirely satisfied with my level of input into the approval of the assessments. The guidance was very clear and the process efficiently managed. The provision of sample questions/guidance at an early stage was very useful.

Notwithstanding my concerns about the lack of discretion to amend individual marks, I am satisfied that the students were treated equitably.

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).

Key issues are likely to include:

- the structure and content of the modules and programmes under consideration, as detailed in the programme specifications and module outlines and other documentation provided to you by the department/school;
- whether the curriculum for the modules and programmes under consideration remain current, valid and relevant;
- whether the learning, teaching and assessment methods used in the modules and programmes under consideration support students in achieving the intended learning outcomes for the programme;
- whether there is evidence of the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching of the modules and programmes under consideration (e.g. curricula informed by current research, opportunities embedded within the curricula for students to undertake research methods training and/or their own independent research)

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

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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?

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.

For example, this might include:

- innovative modes of learning, teaching and assessment;
- particularly helpful documentation/guidance relating to the assessment process, e.g. assessment criteria, mark proformas
- effective practice in the management of the assessment process, including the operation of boards of examiners;

The Board of examiners meeting was very well organised and chaired with clear documentation and ample opportunity for externals to comment. The meeting with the chair prior to the main BoE meeting provided a useful opportunity to clarify points of procedure and to raise any specific points of concern.

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

This was my first year as external to Durham and the experience has been very rewarding and informative.

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