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**Sent by email to David.short@nottingham.ac.uk**

**28 September 2017**

Dear Mr Short,

**Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2016–2017**

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the BSc in Architectural Studies.

Your Report has been considered by the School in accordance with our approved procedures. I am, therefore, now in a position to respond on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor to the main points you had raised.

**Issues Highlighted**

1. Lack of linkage from one year to another in studio, and between some taught lecture modules and studio.
2. The drawing skills taught in the Year 1 Design Principles and Methods module did not seem to be translating through into consistently good basic orthogonal drawings of plans, sections and elevations in the students' final design project work.
3. Detailed observations and suggestions regarding the Year 3 Design Principles and Methods module.
4. A lack of stand-out work in Year 2 studio work that really engaged with the contextual agenda set out at the beginning of year and related comments.
5. Concerns about the assessment of the Year 3 studio module (suggested interim assessment; appropriate emphasis on research/ urban planning phase work in summative assessment).

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**The following response has been provided on behalf of the School:**

1. The School agrees with your comments concerning the desirability of increased 'linkage' between years of the studio programme, particularly years 1 and 2 and will feed these into its plans for the coming year.
2. Thank you for your observation. The School is aware of the challenge represented by bringing skills learned in the DPM 1 module into the orthographic representation of studio projects in year 1 and will continue to address this issue in the coming year.
3. The School is aware that the Year 3 DPM3 module introduces students to a rather advanced curriculum of scripting and value this as an interesting and beneficial study, which it intends to continue into the coming academic year. The School is, however, planning a review of the DPM stream over the coming session, and is considering introducing electives into DPM 3 (the scripting would under this scheme become one of several options). The review provides an opportunity to consider how the DPM stream might evolve to support studio and the students' general development in appropriate ways. Thank you for your comments which will be considered as a part of the review.
4. The School thanks you for your observations and believes that the apparent lack of engagement with issues of context may in part be due to an over editing of their work by the students themselves as they curate their work into a concise portfolio. The School will however be attentive to the issue in the coming session and thanks you for your suggestion of interim reflective work.
5. The two important points that you raise are also of concern to the teaching team and will be given attention over the coming year.

**The University is pleased to note your positive comments including:**

1. your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process;
2. Professional Practice Module – rigorously taught and examined, with appropriate and relevant content;
3. support received from the School in preparation for your role.

I hope that you will find this response satisfactory and we thank you for your continued support of the programme.

In order to meet the expectations of the QAA Quality Code, both the External Examiner Annual Report and this Institutional Response will be published on the University website and will be available to all students and staff.

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The University's provision of the formal Institutional Response is not intended to constrain direct communication between schools and their External Examiners. Schools are encouraged to discuss with their External Examiners any matters of detail raised in their Reports and, more widely, any issues impacting on the quality and standards of awards, including possible changes to programmes.

We are most grateful for your comments and for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Simon Wright  
Academic Registrar