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Sent by email to p.a.scarf@salford.ac.uk

18 September 2017

Dear Professor Scarf,

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

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the Statistics and Operational Research modules on undergraduate programmes.

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. Not enough unseen questions on examination papers. Should be more emphasis on puzzles and problem solving, starting in year 1.

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

1. The School is gradually introducing more problem solving to its degree scheme, via compulsory modules in Years 1 and 2. Across modules, the School strives to achieve an appropriate balance between seen and unseen questions. Examination papers in Mathematics will always have a significant number of questions based on theory and bookwork, and providing unseen questions is difficult in some modules, but the School will seek to include them whenever appropriate.

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Your comments on the classification rules are welcomed and have been noted. The University aims to provide a consistent approach across the full breadth of University awards and these are closely monitored to ensure that there has been no significant impact on student outcomes across the University as a whole. Your comments will inform future University consideration of its classification rules.

The University is pleased to note your positive comments including:

1. your positive indications regarding the programme structure and academic standards.

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.

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