

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE: EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT 2012-2013 - Certificate of Higher Education (Humanities)

Dear Dr Davies,

I am writing further to your External Examiner's report for the above programme(s). Your Report has been considered by the Cardiff Centre for Lifelong Learning 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

Your Report raised issue(s) which have been referred for consideration by the School.

1. **[3] your detailed (bullet-pointed) observations on the relationship between learning outcomes and the assessment process;**
2. **[5 and 8.16] the recommended advance provision of background information and assessment samples "as there is not enough time on the day of the Exam Board to assimilate all the necessary information and make informed judgements about it";**
3. **[5] your related request for sight of samples of student feedback from a range of courses.**

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

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Davies for the constructive and supportive comments made in her report. We are pleased to note her positive comments regarding the following points: that the structure and content of the programme are entirely appropriate and constitute a varied and suitably wide-ranging and flexible curriculum for students; that the range of assessments methods is varied and appropriately designed; that overall the teaching and feedback on assessments is of a very high standard; and that the external examiner was impressed with the professionalism and conscientiousness shown by the tutors in the assessment process.

The external examiner has expressed her concern on the relationship between learning outcomes and the assessment process. We fully appreciate that the alignment of learning outcomes to assessment criteria and assessment tasks is a fundamental principle for course design. Indeed, it is an area that we have been working on for several years, both through subject specific staff development sessions and via one-to-one meetings between the Humanities co-ordinator and tutor. It is our intention to continue this strategy with a view to continuing to improve in this area.

With regard to her recommendation of the advance provision of background information and assessment samples, it is good to know that the external examiner found the advance provision of Humanities and Exploring the Past materials useful. We will endeavour to provide more samples of assessed student work in advance of the next examination board.

End of course evaluation forms from a range of 2013/14 Humanities courses will be made available to the external examiner on the day of the next examination board."

Positive Comments

The School and University are pleased to note your positive comments on the School's provision including:

- a. **[1, 2 and 3] your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process;**
- b. **[6] your commendation of Handbooks and other documentation supporting identified courses which might be used as examples of good practice.**

I hope that you will find this response satisfactory and thank you for your service as External Examiner.

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 Registry web pages and will be available publically.

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.

Mrs Jill Bedford
Director of Registry and Academic Services