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Sent by email to Dr Adam Benham

24 June 2019

Dear Dr Benham,

Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2017/18

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's report for the BSc in Biochemistry, BSc in Genetics, BSc in Molecular Biology and the BSc in Biotechnology.

Your report has been considered by the School and is the basis of this Institutional Response on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor. The School will also use its contents to help inform their [Annual Review and Enhancement](#) process and where appropriate, [Periodic Review](#).

Issues highlighted in your report:

1. Clearer guidance and a written explanation of the decision making process should be provided to externals at the outset, if papers have been scaled.
2. No opportunity to review the marking proformas for MBiochem projects, and it was not clear, for example, whether double marking followed the same procedure as for 3rd year projects.

Response provided by the School:

1. This year the 'subject exam board' (where the marks from the modules are discussed and verified, prior to the External Examiners arriving) will include a proforma where the module leaders are asked to reflect briefly

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upon the performance of each assessed element of the module. If any scaling is undertaken then the rationale for it will be included in this proforma, which will be made available to the External Examiners as part of the standard documentation for their visit.

2. The double marking process for the MBiochem Year 4 projects followed the same process as for the Year 3 project reports. The two markers determine their feedback, and informally note a suggested mark for each section of the project. They then meet and discuss each section of the report before agreeing a mark between them, The proformae for all Year 3 and Year 4 Project Reports will be available to view on the VLE (Learning Central).

The University is pleased to note your positive comments including:

1. Your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process.
2. The academic staff members continue to provide detailed annotation and feedback on exam scripts and coursework – the effort that staff made to achieve this is noteworthy.
3. The Biosciences support staff are to be congratulated for facilitating the delivery of exam and assessment paperwork with a short turnaround.
4. The range of practical, project, placement and Masters level opportunities for Cardiff Biosciences students is impressive, enhances the student experience, and has grown since the implementation of the four-year degrees.

We hope that you will find this response satisfactory and 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's [Public Information website](#) and will be available to all students and staff.

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

Yours sincerely,



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