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Sent by email to u.sengupta@mmu.ac.uk

15 January 2021

Dear Mr Sengupta,

Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2019/20

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

Your report does not appear to raise any significant issues that require a more detailed response, however the School have been asked to note the following comments:

- COVID – Long-term delivery strategy – and changes for this year.
- COVID related assessment strategies that are looking beyond 'emergency'/disrupted year measures to maintain standards.
- Development and support of a climate change and sustainability agenda/position as a school.
- The past year has seen the development of some specialisations at masters level at the WSA, but the dialogue about a digital culture that exists from the BSc is an ongoing discussion.
- How staff shortages/leavers will be addressed.

I am confident that the Programme Team will endeavour to address the issues identified in your report and your comments will help inform their [Annual Review and Enhancement](#) process.

Degree Outcomes

Whilst you have not raised this as a concern in your report from a subject specific point of view, the Chair of the Academic Standards and Quality Committee has asked the School to review their degree outcomes profile as there has been a



significant rise in first class honours degrees during 2019/20 compared with other years.

The School will be required to look at this in detail to try and understand any underlying factors that may have contributed to this both positive and negative. I am sure you will agree that it is important we ensure that academic standards are appropriately set and maintained with reference to external expectations in line with our responsibility to publish a Degree Outcomes Statement as specified by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) Statement of Intent to protect the value of UK degrees.

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

1. Your positive comments regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process.
2. Confirmation that the actions taken as a result of the variation of assessments in relation to industrial action and Covid-19 have been appropriate to protect the academic standards of the programme and have allowed students to achieve their programme level learning outcomes.
3. Preliminary feedback from the students interviewed in terms of support and flexibility have been positive. Staff should be congratulated on this aspect.
4. I am impressed by the structural changes over the past couple of years, this is particularly visible in Yr1 & Yr2.
5. The reference to Lawson's work and to look at what design education is a positive self-critical approach. It is a good reference for an institution looking ahead and improving constantly. This is what I see happening at WSA.

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'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,



Mr Simon Wright
Academic Registrar