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Sent by email to k.i.brain@bham.ac.uk

30 November 2016

Dear Dr Brain,

Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2015–2016

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the MPharm (Pharmacology).

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.

Issue Highlighted

Inconsistencies between marking criteria used for assessment by the School and decile descriptors detailed in the University "Generic Marking Criteria".

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

The School agrees that even if assessments are not assessed using the university generic scheme, there should be some alignment with local schemes. The School does aim to internally review all marking schemes as well as assessments and will ensure that the review teams are aware of this comment and look out for any similar inconsistencies.

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The University is pleased to note your positive comments including:

1. your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process;
2. clear, professionally organised and efficient induction of External Examiners;
3. commendation of a broad range of assessment styles and of the coverage of quantitative Pharmacology.

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