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Sent by email to Dr Christopher Harrison

28 January 2020

Dear Dr Harrison,

Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2018/19

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's report for the MBBCh Phase 3.

Your report has been considered by colleagues in 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](#).

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 Schools move towards Programmatic assessment.
3. The considerable choice offered to students through a wide range of Student Selected Components (SSC) throughout the course.

Issues highlighted in your report and response provided by the School:

1. **Assessment Process:** *The lack of a response to external examiner feedback with regards to unsatisfactory examination questions.*

Sincere apologies that responses to your careful feedback were not sent in a timely manner ahead of the preliminary board meetings. From 2019/20 we have incorporated all dates into the PSS team workflow calendar to ensure timely sending of all information relating to the assessments.



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2. **Assessment Process:** *The current situation whereby students are assessed on their best two scores on the progress tests. This can lead to a significant proportion of students not making an effort in the third progress test should they achieve high scores in the first two.*

We are in the process of a significant review of the Progress Tests (PT) at Cardiff. This project is based on the current suboptimal model, which in addition to the issue highlighted, also means that feedback to students is unhelpful due to the current Regulations regarding adjusted scores, no requirement to demonstrate progression etc.

Changes we are proposing include:

- Introduce formative PT to Year 1.
- Increase number of PTs in Years 2-4 to four/year.
- Reduce number of PTs in Year 5 when GMC-MLA AKT introduced.
- Reduce number of items per test to 125.
- Alternative standard setting method- norm referencing for Years 2-4.
- Remove requirement to adjust raw marks to adjusted 50% reported mark on SIMS.
- Introduce aggregate grades in order to monitor progress.
- Change progression rules- requirement to demonstrate progress across years.

We have met with the Head of Quality and Standards and the College IT business partner in order to enable the project to progress with the aim of introducing the new model from 2021/22.

3. **Assessment Process:** *The emphasis on feedback rather than pass-fail gradings. Whilst this is appropriate, it would be beneficial for students to receive consistent mentoring to allow them to interpret and respond to the feedback they receive.*

We are in the process of reviewing the feedback given to students across the curriculum with the aim of improving utility and student feedback literacy. We are hoping to introduce a process whereby students pro-actively engage with their educational supervisors and personal tutors to share feedback received in order to develop personalised learning objectives on subsequent placements. We anticipate that by improving the quality of feedback, this will improve the consistency of mentoring regarding the interpretation of feedback.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Wright', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Simon Wright
Academic Registrar