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Sent by email to [g.i.challis@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:g.i.challis@warwick.ac.uk)

30 November 2016

Dear Professor Challis,

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

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the Organic Chemistry modules on undergraduate programmes.

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.

**Issues Highlighted**

1. Students should continue to be encouraged to obtain publication-quality characterisation data for compounds prepared during the course of their final year MChem research projects, in line with best practise at other institutions. In addition, the correct reporting of such data, in particular HRMS data, should be clearly articulated to the students.
2. Encouragement for examiners to base questions on real life examples from the literature wherever possible. If they do not, there is danger that the students will be examined on a transformation that has no precedent in the literature and may even be impossible.

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

1. The School will do this. The requirement to characterise new compounds to the standard expected in a published paper was highlighted during an introductory briefing for MChem project students at the start of 2016/17, and your comments have been forwarded to all project supervisors.
2. The School is happy to adopt this suggestion as standard practice, and all academic staff have been informed.

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

1. your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process;
2. commendable breadth of organic chemistry covered in the final year of the MChem;
3. helpful provision of examination model answers and timetable for the return of comments on examination papers;
4. commendation of rigorous marking procedures for MChem final year projects
5. tireless efforts of staff to improve an already excellent course.

I hope that you will find this response satisfactory and we thank you for your continued support of the programme.

As this is your final year as External Examiner, we would like to thank you for your service and we are most grateful for your valuable input into this process.

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,



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