

Sent by email to [r.m.gillett@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:r.m.gillett@qmul.ac.uk)

13 October 2015

Dear Dr Gillett,

**Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2014 – 2015**

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the BA in German (German language, literature, film, culture, society history).

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 have raised.

**Issue(s) Highlighted:**

1. your request for access to all, or most of, the work which contributed towards an assessment;
2. your concerns regarding the practice of having the same division of coursework and examination in each course;
3. your concerns regarding your role in the assessment process and on arrangements for, and information presented to, the Examining Board;
4. your comments highlighting the need for a direct correlation between the number of errors and the marks awarded;
5. your request for more argumentative questions, in literature papers..

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

1. The issue of sample work sent to External Examiners has been determined by the School's Teaching & Learning Committee and currently only the coursework where there is a discrepancy between coursework mark and exam mark is sent. However, it would not be a problem for the School to provide you with a selection of all coursework. The School is currently investigating the possibility of the External Examiners spending an extra day in Cardiff to look at Assessment papers. This will permit access to the full range of assessment materials;
2. the practice you have highlighted is a School-wide approach. Your concerns have been noted and will be reported to the School's Teaching and Learning Committee for consideration;

3. the School thanks you for highlighting a number of practical challenges faced by the School's Examining Board and by yourself as External Examiner. These will be considered by the School in advance of the next Examining Board and the German Examination Liaison Officer will contact you early in 2016 with further clarification;
4. the School has confirmed that this refers to a particular aspect of one of the (language) marking schemes whereby a direct correlation between the number of errors and marks is possible and will be applied correctly in future;
5. the School will take your suggestion into consideration and will be pleased to receive your thoughts on its draft examination papers in due course.

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

1. your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process
2. your positive comments regarding the breadth and depth of the curriculum offered;
3. your endorsement of the award of marks at the upper end of the scale that rewards excellent work;
4. your commendation of the responsiveness of the School to your comments and suggestions.

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,



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