

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE: EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT 2013-2014 - MA in History / Medieval British Studies / Ancient & Medieval Warfare (Medieval History)

Dear Professor Small,

I am writing further to your External Examiner's report for the above programme(s). Your Report has been considered by the Cardiff School of History, Archaeology and Religion 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

Your Report raised issue(s) which have been referred for consideration by the School.

- 1. [4, first para] your suggested use of a "specially designed feedback form to take account of the rather particular demands of putting together a palaeography portfolio" for a named module;**
- 2. [4, second para] your detailed observations and suggestion regarding the appropriate length of an identified assessment "to bring the assessment into line with some other modules".**

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

"We thank Professor Graeme Small for his comments. We agree that a specially designed feedback form for the palaeography portfolio would be a useful aid for both students and assessors and a draft form is currently being drafted. The 'Skills in Historical Research' module is assessed by a portfolio of at least 1,000 words (50%) and an essay of 2,000 words (50%). The reason for the word limit on the portfolio being 1,000 words rather than 2,000 words is that this is not simply an essay-writing exercise but represents class work in a variety of forms, and may include material such as images, maps and analytical tables in addition to 1,000 words of writing. However, it would be possible to rephrase the assessment criteria to make this clear.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Small for all his work as external examiner for these MA programmes and for his constructive and very helpful comments on the programmes."

Positive Comments

The School and University are pleased to note your positive comments on the School's provision including:

- a. [1, 2 and 3] your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process;**
- b. [2, 6 and 7] your commendation of the Programme design which "serve effectively for research preparation at PGT and PGR level";**
- c. [6] your commendation of the Programme's "commitment to a Palaeography course and the possibility of language options".**

I hope that you will find this response satisfactory and thank you for your service as External Examiner.

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 Registry web pages and will be available publically.

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.

Dr S L Williamson

for Dr C B Turner
Academic Registrar