

## **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE: EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT 2012-2013 - MSc in Sports and Exercise Physiotherapy**

Dear Dr Morrissey,

I am writing further to your External Examiner's report for the above programme(s). Your Report has been considered by the School of Healthcare Sciences 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. The following response has been provided on behalf of the School.

*"Thanks you for your constructive comments; we have addressed some specific areas you have highlighted:*

#### **1. [6, second para] the External Examiner's "impression that there was a somewhat tight marking band" and related comments**

*As noted, there is often a tight marking band across double marked pieces of work. We would like to re-assure the External Examiner that the work is independently double marked and although the total mark often comes out similar, this has often arisen from a different allocation of marks across the segments. Co-incidentally, the majority of markers on the programme modules have been marking together for some years now and have probably developed their approaches to assessment along similar lines.*

*The comments were correct regarding the additional help that students get if it is perceived that they might be struggling and this is deliberate. The small group teaching on this programme lends itself to this approach. However, the comments about stretching the more able students is very pertinent and is something that we are again aware of and are aiming to address.*

#### **2. [6, third para] the suggested "Need to take a view on setting out on projects which can not meet their objectives" and related suggestion**

*Whilst every effort is made to develop the students' thinking towards a pragmatic approach to research project choice, there is still an element of independent thinking encouraged and some students may choose not to take on board the advice given. This is also addressed at the scientific scrutiny and ethics committee to ensure that the student has developed realistic aims for the chosen study. However, this is not always evident following the writing up process and is marked accordingly within the developed criteria.*

#### **3. [6, fourth para] the External Examiner's indication that "At exam board, we should have the complete profiles of graduating students".**

*This has now been addressed at the last examining board and it made a significant difference."*

Your query [at 6, penultimate para] regarding "any requirement for external examiners to attend" the Examining Board has been noted. I can confirm that it is the University's expectation that External Examiners attend Examining Boards where, in addition to ensuring the validity, reliability and explicitness of the assessment process, they contribute in a timely way to the monitoring of quality and standards.

## 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. **[6] in particular, your reports of "Excellent feedback to students" and of "innovative examination structures".**

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.

Mrs Jill Bedford  
Director of Registry and Academic Services