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Sent by email to c.john@imperial.ac.uk

07 February 2020

Dear Dr John,

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

I am writing further to the receipt of your report for the BSc Medical Pharmacology and BSc (Intercalated) Pharmacology.

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. There is a clear focus on the application of pharmacology within research throughout the course which should help those students wishing to pursue a research career. This is a definite strength of the programme.
3. Exam papers demonstrate many aspects of excellent practice – they are clearly mapped to learning outcomes, usually very good detail within model answers, the single best answer questions are very well written and the inclusion of essay questions remains a real strength of the exam process as it allows depth of knowledge to be tested.
4. Level of feedback provided to the students is excellent – very well organised. Even the final year students receive detailed feedback on their work.



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

1. ***The Assessment Process:*** *To include more data interpretation within the exams to ensure you are testing a broader range of skills.*

ME3037 Critical Analysis of the Literature now has a new exam that is 100% data interpretation. Dr Lang has shown Dr John an example of the type of exam that will be set. Dr John was happy with the format.

ME3050 Drug Discovery & Development now has a pharmacokinetic analysis question within the final exam.

We continue to add data analysis and interpretation to course activities as previously outlined.

2. ***The Assessment Process:*** *A more consistent approach was taken to exam paper structure.*

We try to be as consistent as possible with exam paper structure and the use of guidance and rubrics. However, a mainstay of the course is that we examine the students in different ways and ultimately this will lead to variability. There is also deliberate variation across the three years of the course: more simple “single best answer” or short answer questions in Yr 1 to lengthy essays in Yr 3. This will again cause variation. We will review the paper setting procedures to apply consistency as appropriate.

We will also endeavour to add exam rubrics to module pages on Learning Central, give students sight of past papers and/or provide mock exams where appropriate. All will provide the students with feed forward information as to what to expect in the exams.

3. ***Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement:*** *It would be good to include more team based elements to the assessment.*

There are a variety of team-based teaching activities and some assessments within the course. As a teaching group, the pharmacology staff have taken the step to avoid such assessments where possible, given they can be very difficult to apply fairness and equality to. On this occasion we would choose to respectfully disagree and do not want to include further assessments of this nature. In saying that, we are always open to ideas and could be persuaded if presented with new ideas/methods that work well.

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', written in a cursive style.

Mr Simon Wright
Academic Registrar