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Sent by email to [a.a.piccini@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:a.a.piccini@bristol.ac.uk)

16 August 2017

Dear Dr Piccini,

**Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2016–2017**

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the MSc in Science, Media and Communication.

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. The opportunity for Public Engagement to have more of a third sector focus in terms of the needs of non-academic partners: public engagement as co-production rather than uni-directional communication of scientific knowledge;
2. A more consistent 'house style' for unit handbooks would help students to navigate through the course;
3. ***Introduction to Science & Technology Studies*** – a recommendation that the language of the criteria be used more fully in the feedback;
4. ***Presenting Science*** – there was no video documentation sent to the External Examiner prior to the examination board;
5. ***Public Engagement*** – a more detailed brief is needed for this assignment as it was unclear. In addition, more of the literature from the practitioner side of the debates could be brought in as the module as it currently seems firmly

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- focused on academic critique rather than on the potential for co-producing knowledge;
6. Support for students to develop their presentation skills

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

1. The teaching team will consider your suggestions towards revamping the syllabus.
2. The School will consider the design of the handbook in a forthcoming board of studies.
3. The teaching team take on board the point about feedback reflecting marking criteria and will endeavour to map feedback onto the language used in assessment information.
4. Regarding both the above, the teaching team have already had discussions with Techniquet about how to organise and present the module for 2017-18. Some of the issues that arose during these meetings related to the information that was given to students (form, content, timing etc.), and plans are in place to work more closely with Techniquet next academic year and to ensure a more consistent student experience. The provision of external examiner information (including videos of sample student presentations) will be included in this discussion.
5. The summative assignment was a mock grant application, preceded by a formative assessment. Students were asked to present their emerging public engagement idea to the class during weeks 10 and 11 based on what they had learnt in class in the previous lectures. This was a formative assignment and each student was allocated ten minutes to present. After each presentation, there was five minutes allotted for questions, peer feedback and academic feedback on their idea and feedforward for the related summative assessment. The academic feedback was provided by two members of the teaching team. Peer feedback was provided by the rest of the class who were asked to attend all presentations. As well as feedback and feedforward, the students were provided with a grant application brief, which can be found under Lecture 11 of the module on Learning Central. Fifteen minutes at the end of Lecture 11 was allocated to discuss the assessment and to field any queries about the assignment and/or brief.
6. The teaching team will consider your suggestions towards providing further support for integrating presentation skills support into the syllabus.

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

1. Your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process;
2. The detail of the unit handbooks and methods of teaching and learning;
3. The involvement of Techniquest and Tenovus on the programme is particularly noteworthy and provides excellent added value to the learning experience.

I hope that you will find this response satisfactory and all School responses will be discussed in detail through the Annual Review and Enhancement process. 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,



Mr Simon Wright  
Academic Registrar