



Academic & Student Support Services
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Prifysgol Caerdydd
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Sent by email to jeni.harden@ed.ac.uk

24 June 2016

Dear Dr Harden,

Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2015– 2016

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the Doctor of Health Studies (DHS), taught-element.

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. Your observation of a lack of critical engagement in concepts particularly among weaker students.
2. Your indication that, amongst weaker students, there was a lack of significant improvement from draft stage to final submission of assessed work despite the very detailed comments provided.
3. Your request for the inclusion of details of the marking process and of how markers reach agreement on the final mark in information provided to the External Examiner.

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

1. This is an area that module tutors pay particular attention to and assignment feedback (formative and summative) contains clear guidance for the development of critical facility on the part of learners.
2. As you have noted, recommended improvements on draft assignments are provided in detail by tutors. The School has also confirmed that one of the assessment criteria for final assignment submission is the extent to which the student has responded to the draft feedback.
3. An explanation of the internal marking process, including how first and second markers reach agreement on the final mark, has been included in the programme handbook, which forms part of the introductory information for Programme External Examiners.

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 particular commendation of the feedback provided to students and of the contribution of the administrative team to the assessment process;
3. your confirmation that issues you have mentioned in previous year have been addressed.

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,



Mr Simon Wright
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