



Academic & Student Support Services
Academic Registrar Simon Wright LLB
Gwasanaethau Academaidd a Chefnogi Myfyrwyr
Cofrestrwydd Academaidd Simon Wright LLB

Cardiff University
McKenzie House
30-36 Newport Road
Cardiff CF24 0DE

Tel *Ffôn* | +44(0)29 2087 9189
www.cardiff.ac.uk

Prifysgol Caerdydd
Tŷ McKenzie
30-36 Heol Casnewydd
Caerdydd CF24 0DE

Sent by email to aorbasli@brookes.ac.uk 25 February 2019

Dear Dr Orbasli,

Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2017/18

I am writing further to the receipt of your report for the MSc Sustainable Building Conservation

Your report has been considered by 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](#).

Issues highlighted in your report:

1. **Academic Standards:** A general fall in the quality of work (compared to the assignments) and a level of failure on the dissertation raises some concerns and this might be an area where more structured support could be offered to the students.
2. **Examination of Master's Dissertations:** On one dissertation work, the difference between the two assessors' marks were notable, and from an examiner point of view some more information on the moderation process through which the final mark was reached would have been useful.
3. **Examination of Master's Dissertations:** The feedback sheets for the dissertation a little confusing, with the assessor comments placed in various boxes. Particularly for students who haven't done well, some more constructive feedback placed in one 'box' could be useful.

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www.caerdydd.ac.uk

Response provided by the School:

1. **Academic Standards- Dissertation:** It is appreciated that whilst there are three structured interim submissions, the supervisory meetings have previously been arranged between the supervisor and student on an ad-hoc basis. Due to a change of both supervisor and module leader this year, it is acknowledged that a greater degree of reporting of attendance and monitoring of frequency of tutorials is required. It has been agreed that a system to address this will be put in place before the beginning of this years' dissertation.
2. **Examination of Master's Dissertations:** The moderation of all Master's dissertations at WSA is as follows:

The Convention used in the School of Architecture is as follows:

- 1) *IF the difference between the marks awarded by the examiners is 10 or less
AND the marks do not straddle a border between pass/fail and pass/distinction
THEN the average mark will be accepted as the agreed mark.*
 - 2) *IF the difference between the marks awarded by the examiners is 10 or less
AND the average marks straddles a border between pass/fail and
pass/distinction
THEN the two examiners are asked to discuss their marks and supply an
agreed mark to the Board of Examiners.*
 - 3) *IF the difference between the marks is greater than 10 but less than 20
THEN the two examiners are asked to discuss their marks and either:*
 - a. *supply an agreed mark to the Board of Examiners OR*
 - b. *refer to 4) below*
 - 4) *IF the difference is greater than 20, OR the two examiners cannot come to an
agreed mark THEN a third examiner will be appointed. He/She will be provided
with the previous marksheets, and should discuss the work with the student's
Supervisor and, if necessary, with the second marker before determining the
final mark. THAT mark will be treated as the "tie-break"; e.g. it will, with consent
of the Chair of the Board of Examiners.*
3. **Examination of Master's Dissertations:** Before being issued to students, all comments are compiled onto one mark sheet. we will endeavour to send a copy of this compiled feedback to the external examiner next year.

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 comments highlighting the different formats for the assignments (essay, condition report, conservation plan) were a useful way to help impart transferable skills in producing different types of documents commonly used in practice and research.

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,



Mr Simon Wright
Academic Registrar