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Sent by email to p.cowan@herts.ac.uk

06 March 2017

Dear Mr Cowan,

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

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the Media Law [20 Credit] and Public Administration [10 Credit] Module on MA/PgDip programmes in Broadcast Journalism, in Magazine Journalism and in News Journalism.

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.

Issue Highlighted

Marks do not always seem to reflect the gravity of errors contained within some student work on the PA feature.

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

The School appreciates your comments. This year extra guidance has been provided to students in the form of more detailed grade descriptors and where serious errors have been made, such as a libel, these will be automatic fails in order to reflect what the consequences for such a mistake would be in the news industry.

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The University is pleased to note your positive comments including:

1. your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process
2. very pertinent assignments, with astute and helpful feedback.

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
Academic Registrar