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

**30 March 2017**

Dear Dr Piccini,

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

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. Your reports of communication gaps in your dealings with the School.
2. Your suggested use of some form of online journal for students to test out their ideas about the public communication of science and technology.
3. Consideration of expanding the dissertation module to include practice-based and placement-focussed options.

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

1. The School recognises your concerns and apologises for this. External Examiners are provided access to module materials and samples via Learning Central and the School will make sure that this is clear in future. Consideration will also be given to sending paperwork to External Examiners at the beginning of each session.

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The School also apologises for the late change of room for the examination board that you attended. It was unfortunate that the few students registered on the MSc Science, Media and Communication had extensions for their Dissertations, so you did not get to see these at the Board. This year there are more students on this programme and hopefully there will be fewer extensions.

2. The School thanks you for this suggestion and will refer it for consideration by the programme leader.
3. The School also thanks you for this recommendation which will be considered further by the Board of Studies.

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

1. your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process;
2. stimulating modules generating some original and thoughtful work from students;
3. detailed, fair and useful feedback provided to students.

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,



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