

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE: EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT 2013-2014 - Master of Architecture (dissertations)

Dear Dr Adler,

I am writing further to your External Examiner's report for the above programme(s). Your Report has been considered by the Welsh School of Architecture 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

Your Report raised issue(s) which have been referred for consideration by the School.

1. **[1] your indication that "the 'social sciences' model adopted by the School"...can impair fluency in developing the more discursive arguments favoured by some topics" and related comments**
2. **[6] your observation that "Skills and techniques in drawn analysis could be improved" and related suggestion;**
3. **[6] your comments on the need for "a greater depth of historical understanding" exhibited in "the average to weak dissertations".**

The following responses have been provided on behalf of the School.

1. *"The School recognises this is an issue. It is in the process of re-drafting its Dissertation Handbook to present a broader range of research methodologies. In future, it also plans to allocate students to seminar groups, based around the School's existing research groups, which we hope will encourage students to adopt an approach more appropriate to the topic in question."*

2 & 3 *"We are endeavouring to build up a workshop series to support the dissertation, bringing in external and internal experts to talk about different approaches to research – including historical research and research through drawing."*

Positive Comments

The School and University are pleased to note your positive comments on the School's provision including:

- a. **[1, 2 and 3] your positive indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process**
- b. **[4 and 6] your report of positive student perceptions of the dissertation aspect of the Programme.**

I hope that you will find this response satisfactory and thank you for your service as External Examiner.

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 Registry web pages and will be available publically.

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.

Dr S L Williamson

for Dr C B Turner
Academic Registrar