

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE: EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT 2013-2014 - BSc in Optometry (Yrs 2 & 3)

Dear Dr McKeefry,

I am writing further to your External Examiner's report for the above programme(s). Your Report has been considered by the Cardiff School of Optometry and Vision Sciences 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. The following response has been provided on behalf of the School.

“[4(3)] reflections on meetings of the External Examiners with students, request that more students should be available for future meetings and related observations

The examinations staff were extremely disappointed and embarrassed by the poor availability of students when called for this meeting, particularly as the student body had been asked in advance to confirm if they would not be available. Many who had failed to confirm their unavailability subsequently did not turn up when they were asked to do so. In order to guarantee the availability of a range of suitable students that the external examiners can reliably select from, we will be asking available students to attend at the school just before the scheduled meeting time. A register will then allow the external examiners to select a suitable sample for the meeting. The School will explore further means to improve the availability of a greater number of students for next year.

[4(4)] the External Examiner's reiterated comments on the appropriate word count of “the research projects”.

This has been addressed by updating the module descriptor for this module, clearly identifying that a word count of 7,000 is adequate, whilst not limiting a good project/student to this restriction. Further, a new option of a series of three short (~2,500) review articles is being offered, and if uptake is there then trialled, to allow / encourage concise scientific writing.”

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(1) second para] your acknowledgement of enhanced “internal quality control procedures that have been implemented for exam preparation”.

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