

Academic & Student Support Services
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Simon Wright LLB



Sent by email to e.price@abertawe.ac.uk

03 December 2015

Dear Dr Price,

Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual Report 2014 – 2015

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the BA in Journalism, Media & Cultural Studies / Journalism & Culture / Journalism & Communications / Media & Communications (Welsh Language modules).

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(s) Highlighted:

1. Your detailed observations on the nature of essays set;
2. Your comments on the marking and correcting of language;
3. Your request for more information on the process of second marking;
4. Your request for access to examples of work at the same level in the School's English language provision in order to ensure that there is consistency across levels and across languages;
5. Your recommendation that the course handbook should be sent to an editor or proof reader and related comments.

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

1. Firstly we would like to thank Dr Elain Price for her thorough examination of the first ever Welsh language module at the School, Yr Ystafell Newyddion. We have discussed this and will be setting a far more specific question in each module, as there will be two separate modules (both 20 credits, level 5, in two semesters) across the year.
2. The issue regarding the marking linked to the linguistic standard of the assessments overall has been considered and we do not accept the Examiner's finding that the standards were overlooked in order to attract students to study the module. This is not our aim, however we do welcome the suggestion to draw attention to any mistakes in order to help the students

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develop but not penalising them any further. This is something we already do in the students' face-to-face feedback – and it is something we can document further too. However there is a fine balance between students learning, developing and improving their confidence in their basic journalistic skills and their linguistic ability.

3. The Examiner also drew attention to the double marking, and the request for further information of the discussion between the markers. This is something we can rectify for the next academic year.
4. As the module wasn't running last year –the Examiner points out there was nothing to compare. We will explore whether providing English language examples would assist in this process in the future, however there is not a comparable module in English and therefore would be difficult to see how this would help overall.
5. We have noted the Examiner's comments with regards to the module handbook which is currently being revised. We have also noted the examiner's comments with regards to receiving documentation in Welsh.

Noting your comments on the Examining Board Handbook, I can confirm that a Welsh language version is available and is currently being revised for the start of the next cycle of Examination Boards.

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 particular commendation of the differentiation between the assessment tasks for Level 5 and Level 6, of the written practical assessments and of the feedback on assessments 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.

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Yours sincerely,



Mr Simon Wright
Academic Registrar