

Academic & Student Support Services  
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Sent by email to [s.winder@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:s.winder@sheffield.ac.uk)

07 December 2015

Dear Professor Winder,

**Re: Institutional Response: External Examiner Annual and Dissertation Stage Reports 2014 – 2015**

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Reports for the MSc in Tissue Engineering.

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 indication that "some model answers remain too brief to be useful for moderation or external examining purposes.
2. Your requirement for evidence of independent marking across all candidates;
3. Your concern regarding a case of inconsistent marking by an internal examiner and suggested adjustment of the marking criteria.

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

1. Within the model answers, key bullet-points summarise what is required as core components for each essay (accompanied by the allocated marks for each point). The main reason this model answer format was introduced and retained is that the Programme Leads perceive it would be very difficult to include in-depth details on every aspect of each essay model answer required, given the very broad nature of the essay titles set, and with the additional need to reflect the students' own self-directed learning within their answers.

Whilst the programme leads are currently satisfied that the present model answer approach is fit for purpose and meet University requirements, the School are initiating a quality assurance review of all postgraduate

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programmes within assessment and feedback in 2015/16, hence this assessment task will be reviewed as part of that process.

2. The School will review process and ensure that all Marker 1, Marker 2 and Agreed Mark sheets will be provided in future, in order to demonstrate fairness and rigour to the marking process.
3. The School will consider the External Examiner comments alongside the aforementioned review of assessment and feedback particularly in relation to this marking criteria. External Examiners will be consulted with regard to potential changes prior to the 2015/16 assessment period.

**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 commendation of the implementation of clear marking proformas for project dissertations.

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