



Academic & Student Support Services
Academic Registrar Simon Wright LLB
Gwasanaethau Academaidd a Chefnogi Myfyrwyr
Cofrestrwyd Academaidd Simon Wright LLB

Cardiff University
McKenzie House
30-36 Newport Road
Cardiff CF24 0DE

Tel *Ffôn* I +44(0)29 2087 9189
www.cardiff.ac.uk

Prifysgol Caerdydd
Tŷ McKenzie
30-36 Heol Casnewydd
Caerdydd CF24 0DE

Sent by email to m.pendleton@sheffield.ac.uk

21 September 2016

Dear Dr Pendleton,

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

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for all Japanese modules on undergraduate programmes.

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 encouragement to consider expanding the range of modules offered, particularly in non-language topics.
2. Your detailed comments and suggestions on the length and nature (language) of assessment tasks.
3. Your indication that a slightly more rigorous proofreading process of draft exam papers would be appreciated.
4. Your detailed observations and suggestions on the new system of on-site viewing of samples by, and attendance at exam boards of, External Examiners.

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

1. The Japanese programme is now working towards to create a single honours Japanese Studies programme and hopes that this will result in an expansion of module choice, particularly in non-language Japanese studies modules. There are also plans to create a CLIL (content and language integrated learning) module for this new single honours programme.
2. The School notes your comments and will reconsider the structure of the examination tasks and how to assess comprehension skills.
3. A more rigorous proofreading exercise will be carried out before sending the exam scripts to external examiners.
4. The School will give further consideration to your comments and suggestions.

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 confirmation of the responsiveness of the programme team to your observations;
3. your commendation of induction activities arranged for you, of the commitment of teaching and professional services staff and of the standard of some of the final year research projects.

As this is your final year as External Examiner, we would like to thank you for your service and we are most grateful for your valuable input into this process.

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
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