

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE: EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT 2012-2013 - Cymhwyster Cenedlaethol Tiwtoriaid Cymraeg i Oedolion (National Qualification for Tutors of Welsh to Adults)

Dear Mr Charles,

I am writing further to your External Examiner's report for the above programme(s). Your Report has been considered by the Ysgol y Gymraeg, Caerdydd (Cardiff University School of Welsh) 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.

"The Programme's Structure

The external examiner was completely happy with the structure, aims and objectives of the programme, as well as the capacity to complete the course through combined learning methods and more traditional means.

Academic Standards

The external examiner noted that, in general, the standard of written Welsh amongst students was good, although there was some unevenness and linguistic mistakes that impaired the written expression of some of the weakest students. The Studies Board's response is that incorporating formal feedback in relation to students' linguistic accuracy into the course following every assignment is a way of improving this. Furthermore, language improvement sessions will be held at the start of the course and during the course, as opposed to the end of the course, as is currently the case.

The Assessment Process

The external examiner was happy with the assessment strategies and the detailed feedback the students receive, including the cooperation and understanding between the different centres. It was noted that the external examiner needs to observe more extensively and view a sample of classes from each centre. The Studies Board feels that a formal opportunity to speak to the external examiner, in person, and the opportunity to discuss this in detail, would benefit everyone (see below – Preparation Activities).

Variations were noted in the way that the marking grid is completed by different centres, with some marking in detail in relation to each criterion, while others only use a tick to show a range of grades. The Studies Board agreed that, from now on, everyone should put a grade on the marking grid, as opposed to a tick.

Observations from Year to Year

The way the Qualification has developed significantly over a five year period of external examinations in a very satisfactory way was noted.

Preparation Activity

The external examiner noted that he had received an external examiner's handbook, and was assisted, as needed, by the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Centre. These

arrangements were satisfactory. He noted that no face to face discussions took place. The Studies Board agreed that, if the Qualification was to be implemented once again, it would be desirable for the external examiner to attend one of the initial meetings of the Qualification's Study Board.

Noteworthy Practice and Improvements

The on-line element was praised, although some technical difficulties were identified. Every technical difficulty experienced in 2012-13 has been investigated in detail, and is in the process of being rectified."

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 indications regarding the programme structure, academic standards and assessment process.**

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.

Mrs Jill Bedford
Director of Registry and Academic Services