



Academic & Student Support Services
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Sent by email to ja@soton.ac.uk

26 September 2016

Dear Dr Adams,

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

I am writing further to the receipt of your External Examiner's Report for the BSc in Occupational Therapy (Full-Time).

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. Moves to ensure consistency on feedback provided to students by the marking team.
2. Marking arrangements for research work and support provided for students who undertake quantitative methods in HC3092.
3. Use of the internal moderation report to record and evidence quality procedures (e.g. double marking) and recording of support for deferred and referred students.
4. Availability of individual marking profiles.
5. The advancement of evidencing and documenting reliability of multiple practice placement assessors on students' practice placement assessment.

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

1. Consistency between marking teams for feedback to students will be discussed at the pre-marking meetings, agreeing a preferred format as well as including a section for areas for further development. Tutors will be encouraged to use appropriate descriptors for the grade awarded. Moderation will also include markers moderating several scripts across a band to ensure consistency in the descriptors across bands.
2. Steps will be taken to ensure that the primary research supervisor is not the allocated marker for the research project by providing a list of supervisors and student numbers to the assessment team who allocate markers. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are taught to students, and they are encouraged to use the most appropriate method to address their research question. Students who choose quantitative methods will be given the opportunity to seek support from a tutor who has expertise in this area.
3. Tutors will be reminded to include quality procedures for marking and moderating in the internal moderation report. Moderation will proceed in accordance with the Assessment and Feedback strategy. In this report the module leader will state that students who are re-sitting or repeating a module will be offered a tutorial from the tutor who marked their assignment or from the module leader.
4. In order to obtain an individual tutor marking profile, the spread of marks awarded would need to be manually extracted. This might impact on the speed with which the moderation could be completed. This will be discussed with the assessment team to see whether the process can be automated.
5. The placement team are encouraging educators within the same place of work (not necessarily co-supervisors of the student) to blind mark the student and then compare the marks given. Refresher course are offered regularly to educators to assist in the consistency of marking of students' performance.

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 continued use of detailed and informative marking rubrics, of "outstanding" feedback provided to students and of staff commitment to supporting students;
3. Your confirmation that the programmes develops "externally-focused, independent learners who are able to apply complex theory and foundations to clinical practise scenarios";

I hope that you will find this response satisfactory and we thank you for your continued support of the programme.

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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