

External Examiner Annual Report

2019

Background

1. The procedure for the processing of External Examiners' reports requires an annual report to be presented to the Academic Board on general issues of concern and / or examples of good practice highlighted in the annual reports. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the issues raised have been fully addressed and the examples of good practice acknowledged.
2. External Examiner reports are received by the Quality, Policy and Regulation team where they are reviewed and are sent to the appropriate senior member of the relevant programme for detailed consideration. Such consideration includes formulation of a response to be sent directly to the External Examiner. If there are any areas of serious concern raised by the External Examiner, the Quality, Policy and Regulation team will notify the Chief Executive, senior management and the appropriate committee with respect to the nature of the concern.
3. The reports are then used as part of the input to the annual monitoring report for the programme. The annual monitoring report is considered and monitored by the Learning and Teaching Committee. The External Examiner reports and programme team responses are used by the Quality, Policy and Regulation team to develop this annual report.

Summary of comments

4. The reports were positive with a few comments provided as suggestions for enhancements. In all cases, the academic standards of modules and programmes were confirmed as being at a high standard. The procedures for marking, moderation and administration were generally praised and the improved quality of students' work was noted. In all cases, the response to the External Examiner acknowledged the positive comments made and thanked them for the report.
5. A number of the External Examiners commented on the high standard and quality of feedback given to students and that a range of marks were awarded. It was positive to note the impact of our continued monitoring and efforts to make enhancements to the quality of feedback that is provided to students.
6. Several External Examiners stated that the documentation for the Assessment Boards and administrative processes generally was thorough and that they were conducted in a professional and detailed way.
7. It is pleasing to note that the feedback received from the postgraduate External Examiners was overwhelming positive with one External Examiner suggesting compatibility with Russell Group universities.
8. There were several External Examiners who stated that student engagement and attendance could be enhanced through the use of videos or webinars which would help the student to revisit the difficult aspects at their own pace. This suggestion will be raised at the next Faculty meeting in March 2020.

9. One External Examiner suggested a number of suggestions for improvement including ensuring anonymous marking, not sending draft assignments and that double marking of scripts was not always undertaken. Where appropriate these comments will be addressed, however, at the Assessment Board in January 2020 the other External Examiners present indicated that double marking of all assessments was not standard practice across the sector. Therefore it was agreed that double marking was not appropriate and would not be implemented in line with standard practice

Conclusion

10. As with previous years, the reports are overall very positive with no major concerns over standards or quality. The External Examiners confirmed the academic standards of all our higher education programmes. All recommendations made by external examiners in previous annual reports have been addressed.
11. In line with the expectations of the QAA Quality Code regarding engaging students and transparency of information, all External Examiner reports are made available to students. These can be accessed by students via the myLIBF site.

Quality, Policy and Regulation

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