

External Examiner Annual Report

2020

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 Dean for detailed consideration. Such consideration includes formulation of a response to be sent directly to the External Examiner and addressing any actions required as a result. 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.

Summary of comments

4. The reports were positive with a few comments provided as suggestions for enhancements. In all cases, the External Examiners confirmed that the academic standards for the modules and programmes were of a high standard and comparable with other institutions. No areas of concern were identified.
5. In terms of the Assessment Boards, overall the External Examiners confirmed that they were well run, rigorous and clear documentation was provided. A few External Examiners provided suggestions, these were to provide a distribution of marks to External Examiners ahead of the Assessment Board meetings, to consider having a student representative present and consider sending assessment material and the sample of modules to External Examiners twice a year and ahead of the Assessment Board meetings. Suggestions are considered by the Programme Team.
6. Regarding administration all the comments received were positive. The External Examiners commented on how information was made clear to them and provided in a timely manner. Comments were also made about how the administrative teams were efficient and helpful.
7. In terms of general comments received, again it was overall very positive. External Examiners commented that the marking criteria was clear and consistent, the assessment was rigorous but fair and that the feedback provided to students was of a high standard overall.
8. Whilst overall the reports indicated that the External Examiners were positive in their views a few did make some suggestions. These suggestions did not indicate any fundamental concerns they were more suggestions on possible enhancements or changes to administrative processes. These

suggestions included changing the marking cover sheet, sharing documents via alternative means to email, inclusion of more feedforward, showing average module marks within module commentary and sharing the marking criteria with students.

Conclusion

9. 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 suggestions made by external examiners in previous annual reports have been addressed and those noted in this year's reports will be addressed where necessary.

Quality, Policy and Regulation

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