

EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT FORM FOR TAUGHT COURSES

Name	Professor Monica Greco		
Home Institution	University of Bath		
Email Address			
Name(s) of course(s) examined <i>e.g. Tripos Part/ MPhil/ MRes</i>	MPhil Health, Medicine and Society		
Academic year of examination	2023/24		
Level (<i>Delete as appropriate</i>)		Postgraduate	
Year of Appointment	4th		

	Yes	No	N/A
1. Are the academic standards set for the award appropriate for the qualification, and comparable with similar programmes in other UK institutions?	x		
2. Are you satisfied that you received sufficient programme materials (handbooks, regulations, marking and classing criteria) in a timely manner?	x		
3. Are you satisfied that you were consulted adequately on draft examination papers, and that your comments and suggestions were taken into consideration?			x
4. Are you satisfied that the assessment was pitched at the appropriate level?	x		
5. Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	x		
6. Do the assessment processes measure student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme?	x		
7. Are you satisfied that issues raised on your previous report form have been properly considered and, where applicable, acted upon?	x		
8. Did you receive a written response from the Department to your previous report form?			x

If you replied No to any of the questions above, please expand here:

Do you have any concerns about the course, including standards and quality?

No

Are you satisfied that the procedures associated with the assessment are efficient (e.g. timeframes, draft papers, questions, design and conduct of exam, meetings, vivas)?

Yes

Do you have any comments on marking and classing (e.g. range of marks, action around borderline marks, penalties, moderation, double marking, reconciliation of marks)?

I reviewed essays and dissertations identified as having low marks or high marks, those where examiners had given widely divergent marks or marks across a class boundary, and cases where examiners were unable to agree on a final mark. Based on the scripts I have reviewed, the internal marking process has been conducted appropriately, consistently, and fairly. Marks and classifications were awarded at an appropriate standard. Where there were large discrepancies and a mark was agreed, examiners provided a summary of their discussion and rationale for the final mark. In one case this year, where one of the examiners had awarded an exceptionally high mark and the agreed mark was within the same classification but lower, I felt compelled to recommend that the final mark be aligned with the higher one, and the full grading spectrum should be used.

Do you have any comments on the student experience of the course and/or their experience of the assessment process?

I have not had access to any student feedback that would enable me to comment on this.

Do you have any comments on University policies (e.g. the role of the external examiner, policies around plagiarism, script annotation)?

No

Please describe here any recommendations for improvement.

This year, for the first time in the course of my 4-year tenure, the Senior Examiner offered to share their report with me and to hold a brief meeting to discuss any matters arising from the experience of the 2023/24 academic year. I found this process very helpful, and recommend the same offer should be made to external examiners in future. As we discussed in the meeting, I also think it would be helpful if a simple timeline or 'roadmap' of key dates and processes relating to the HMS programme could be made available to the external examiner at the start of each academic year.

Please highlight any good practice you encountered.

At risk of repeating what I have said year after year about the HMS programme, this year again I was impressed by both the range and the quality of the work I reviewed. I was equally impressed by the quality of feedback provided to candidates on each of their submissions, which typically included a full justification of any reservations and constructive suggestions for improvement.

Board meetings were carried out, as always, with exceptional care to detail and with due deliberation whenever this was required. The dedication of the whole team to providing the highest standard of service (from tuition and supervision to assessment, feedback, and administration of the process) is very clear from everything I have witnessed.

Have you seen any evidence of grade inflation?

No.

If this is your final year as external examiner? If so, have you seen improvements over your tenure? Has the Department acted on your advice?

Yes, this is my final year as external examiner. My tenure started as the Covid pandemic was still raging, and has included the year when processes were disrupted by the marking and assessment boycott (MAB). All through this period communication with the HMS team (examiners and administrators) has been excellent, and the team has always been responsive to my suggestions. I was therefore more than happy to continue for an extra year in this role, when the MAB meant that it would be difficult to appoint a new external examiner.

Do you have any other comments?

I want to express my thanks for being invited into this process, which I have found rewarding and instructive in equal measure. It is unusual to read students' work written in a range of disciplinary idioms in the context of the same role. It has been a pleasure to do so, and I have learned much from the experience. The team has been extremely welcoming over the years, and it has also been a great pleasure to work with them.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maria Quins', is positioned on a light yellow rectangular background. A thin vertical line is to the right of the signature.