

External Examiner's Report Form

The University intends to publish the full report (or extract of) to the public, prospective and current students.

Name: Debra Myhill
Your institution or Professional Association: University of Exeter
Course title(s) (full course name) PGCE
Where applicable, Partner Institution examined:
Progression and Award Board:
Academic Year: 2016-7 Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REPORT SUBMISSION

<p>Please submit your completed form electronically to the CORRECT address as follows:</p> <p>For courses delivered at the UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX: externalexaminersreports@sussex.ac.uk</p> <p>For courses delivered at a PARTNER INSTITUTION: partnerextreports@sussex.ac.uk</p> <p>University reports should be submitted no later than:</p> <table style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 30%;">Undergraduate provision:</td><td>last day of August</td></tr><tr><td>Postgraduate provision:</td><td>6 weeks after the Progression and Award Board</td></tr><tr><td>Partner courses:</td><td>6 weeks after the end of year examination board</td></tr></table>	Undergraduate provision:	last day of August	Postgraduate provision:	6 weeks after the Progression and Award Board	Partner courses:	6 weeks after the end of year examination board
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FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Validated courses

Undergraduate and Postgraduate

PVC
Link Tutor
Head of partner institution
Named contact responsible for quality assurance at the partner institution

PVC
Head of School
Director of Teaching and Learning or Board of Study
Chair of the Module Assessment Board
Chair of the Progression and Award Board
School Curriculum and Assessment Officer



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- 1 Please comment on whether the **standards set by the University** are, in your view, appropriate for the **qualification being studied**.

Please relate your comments to published national subject benchmarks, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, course specifications and other relevant information as appropriate

The standards set, both the academic assignments and the professional requirements for the award of QTS, are fully appropriate.

- 2 Please comment on the appropriateness of the published **marking criteria**.

These are wholly appropriate.

- 3 Please comment on whether you believe **standards of student performance and achievement** are comparable to those of similar courses in **other higher education institutions**?

The standards are comparable to those of other leading ITE institutions

- 4 Please comment on whether you believe existing assessment processes measure student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended course and module **learning outcomes**.

Yes, there is a clear match between the task design and demand and the learning outcomes, which are transparently communicated to students.

- 5 On the basis of the sample of assessments that you have reviewed, please comment on the appropriateness of the application of the marking and moderation processes as evidenced by the annotated scripts and **marks and feedback given**. (*For reasons of confidentiality and data protection individual students should not be named*).

The marking and moderation processes are extremely robust, and the online marking system makes it straightforward to check this robustness. Markers use the bank of comments well and across the set of assignments I saw, comments on things such as referencing practices and argumentation were consistent. At the same time, markers make comments which are individualised to the assignments so the feedback is relevant. Comments on spelling and punctuation were much more consistent than last year, and a formal tone was used in all the assignments I saw. The marks given were appropriate to the achievement evident in the assignment and comparable with other institutions. The weakest assignments were descriptive, lacking criticality and strong argument, whereas stronger assignments increasingly featured these elements. A critical response to the research literature in the literature review section was perhaps the most common area of weakness and it may be worth offering some specific guidance on this. For some students, their assignments were limited from the outset by having chosen too broad a focus, meaning that it was hard to achieve depth in argument and evaluation. Many students had proof-reading errors, probably due to submitting close to the deadline, and the importance of proof-reading could be stressed.

In conclusion, the quality of the marking and moderation is high and to be commended.

- 6 Please indicate whether you are satisfied that the **processes** for assessment, examination and the determination of awards have been **sound, appropriate and fairly conducted**.

The use of the online marking system creates a high level of consistency across the marking team and demonstrates assessment processes which are sound, appropriate and fair. In addition, it was evident on my visit that the way the leadership team scrutinise the assessment process contributes to this rigour.

- 7 Do you have any comments on **resources** as they impact on student performance in assessment processes?

My only comment relates to my experience as External Examiner. The Turnitin system clearly works very well for the marking process, but as an examiner I had problems with the system because it limited the response to 4000 characters, which is fine, but it told me I had exceeded this limit well before I had used up the allowance. Also once I had submitted I could not go back to view my comments so I have had to rewrite this from memory.

8 Please comment on any good practice that you have observed related to **teaching, learning and assessment**.

The course tutors were keen to understand better how they might improve students' performance on QTS Standards 5 and 6. Accordingly, it was arranged for groups of students to meet the examiners so that we could probe this a little more and provide feedback. This kind of critical engagement is to be commended.

9 Please comment on the quality of **teaching and learning methods and learning opportunities**.

The students reported a high level of satisfaction with the course and the course tutors model excellent teaching practice. The PGCE courses are designed around offering rich opportunities for experiencing different teaching methods and approaches, and students appreciate this diversity.

10 Have you had **sufficient access to and the power** to call upon any materials needed to make the required judgements? If not, please give details.

Yes

11 Are there any **other issues** on which you wish to comment? Please consider if issues raised in previous reports have been addressed satisfactorily and/or if you are required to comment on any issues related to a PSB.

It is evident that course tutors take seriously the comments made by External Examiners and all my comments from last year have been responded to.

12 Conclusions and recommendations
(a) Good practice and innovation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The high quality use of Turnitin• The use of bank comments on argumentation to give precise feedback on argumentation
(b) Areas requiring attention
(i) Essential
None
(ii) Advisable
Given the strength of the bank of comments on argumentation, perhaps a parallel set could be created on criticality to support this aspect of students' assignments.
(c) Conclusion of tenure. (Please append an overview of your term of office if this is your final report)
n/a

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