



University of East Anglia

PARTNERSHIPS OFFICE

ANNUAL EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT

Name of institution examined: INTO University of East Anglia

Faculty/School INTO

Course Title(s) **Foundation:** Economics. **Diploma:** Microeconomics; Macroeconomics; Quantitative Methods. **Graduate Diploma:** Quantitative Methods; Economics; Applied Research Skills (Economics Related)

Academic Year: 2018-2019

External Examiner Name: Dr. Robert Mullings

External Examiner’s home University / College or Other Professional / Institutional Affiliation: Economics Division, Nottingham Trent University NG1, 4BU

NB – External Examiner reports are widely circulated, therefore students and staff should not be individually identified. Course Teams will respond to the recommendations made by the External Examiner in the boxes provided. The response should be counter signed by the Head of HE or equivalent within ten working days.

An electronic copy of this report should be emailed to the Head of HE (or equivalent) at the partner institution, to arrive no later than one month after the main assessment board meeting. You will receive a copy of the report with the Course Team’s response completed.

Sufficient Evidence Checklist

Please can you confirm the following:

Programme materials

Did you receive:	Y	N	N/A
a. Programme handbook(s)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Programme regulations (these may be in the programme handbook)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Module descriptions (these may be in the programme handbook)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Assessment briefs/marketing criteria?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Draft examination papers

- a. (i) Did you receive all the draft papers?
- (ii) If not, was this at your request?
- b. (i) Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate?
- (ii) If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?
- c. Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?

Marking examination scripts

- a. (i) Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts?
- (ii) If you did not receive all the scripts, was the method of selection satisfactory?
- b. Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?
- c. Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?

Dissertations/project reports

- a. Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate?
- b. Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?

Coursework/continuously assessed work

- a. Was sufficient coursework made available to you for assessment?
- b. Was the method and general standard of marking and consistency satisfactory?

Orals/performances/recitals/appropriate professional placements

- a. Were suitable arrangements made for you to conduct orals and/or moderate performances/recitals/appropriate professional placements?

Final examiners' meeting

- a. Were you able to attend the meeting?
- b. Was the meeting conducted to your satisfaction?
- c. Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Board of

Examiners?

Maintaining Threshold Academic Standards

Please provide feedback on whether:

The programme and its component parts are coherent with learning outcomes aligned with the relevant qualification descriptor and subject benchmark statements where applicable

The programme and its component parts are coherent with learning outcomes. Moreover, the methods of assessment adequately address all learning outcomes. Additionally, It was apparent that there is a close alignment between the component parts of the programme learning outcomes and the respective qualification descriptor and subject benchmark statements.

The programme reflects appropriate PSRB requirements where applicable

It is my judgement that the programmes at INTO UEA conform to the highest PSBR standards. INTO UEA maintains high organisational standards and professionalism in the delivery of the programmes to the students. INTO UEA there is also committed to the adherence of rigorous standards at all aspects of the delivery of the programmes.

Assessments in modules of the same level are of a comparable standard to those in other UK HEIs

The assessment procedures are of a very high standard and are indeed comparable with best practice in other UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In fact, INTO UEA's assessment methods are procedures are closely aligned to those existing in the Norwich Business School and School of Economics for the same (or similar) modules taught across these separate and distinct entities.

The curriculum is current

There is an effort to incorporate current teaching practice and current events to make the delivery and content appeal effectively to the students. I have found the curriculum to be current and up-to-date and the topics taught are comparable with those taught in other UK HEIs of a similar nature. Additionally, to the extent that the subject matter (or module) being taught allows questions are set and projects formulated on basis of recent or current macroeconomic developments both nationally and internationally.

Assessment criteria, marking schemes and arrangements for classification are set at the appropriate level

The assessment criteria, marking schemes, arrangements for classification and internal moderation procedures are rigorous (but generally fair), detailed, unambiguous, consistent and transparent. On the rare occasions where inconsistencies were highlighted these were noted and action taken to eliminate them. All examinations had marking schemes that were clear and unambiguous thus precluding the occurrence of arbitrariness in the marking process. The procedures adopted also facilitated greater objectivity in marking. Clear and detailed feedback on coursework is provided for all modules. Additionally, the feedback usually consists of constructive comments/critique clearly aimed at improving the overall quality of work.

Of great importance is the fact that the assessment criteria and marking schemes are partly shaped by the learning outcomes and objectives of the programme and are set at the appropriate level. As a consequence of this, good results are continuously obtained by the majority of students across the different modules.

Finally, the assessment criteria, marking schemes, arrangements for classification are set at a level commensurate with, and tailored to suit the specific programme of study the student is undergoing i.e. Foundation, Diploma or Graduate Diploma.

Measuring Achievement, Rigour and Fairness

Please provide feedback on whether:

The types of assessment are appropriate for the subject, the students, the level of study and the expected outcomes

Overall, the types of assessment are appropriate for the subject, the students and the level of study. Further, the Institute works continuously to ensure that this is indeed the case through the incorporation of comments and suggestions for improvement made by External Examiners at the External Board meetings.

Presently, the types of assessment are closely linked to the expected and stated learning outcomes.

The marking scheme/grading criteria have been properly and consistently applied, and internal marking is of an appropriate standard, fair and reliable

The marking scheme/grading criteria have been properly and consistently applied. The marking template for each module is clearly outlined, is fair and is robust. Consequently opportunities for subjectivity and arbitrariness in the marking process are minimised. On the few occasions where inconsistencies were highlighted, these were noted and some action aimed at their elimination was promised. The process of updating draft exam papers upon receipt of external examiner suggestions can however be streamlined and improved. In general however, over the duration of my period as External Examiner, invariably all actionable proposals agreed upon have been implemented.

Clear and detailed feedback on coursework is also provided for all modules. A commendable feature of the process is that the feedback consists of constructive comments/critiques which are clearly aimed at improving the overall quality of work.

As indicated above, the internal marking and moderation procedures are also very robust. As an external examiner at INTO UEA I have never had to make a query or flag the extent of internal moderation of the marks at INTO UEA. What is more, there is evidence of discussion and deliberations between First and Second Markers in the determination of the final mark to be awarded to students.

Notwithstanding the rigor and robustness of the system, the current system still allows some discretion on the part of the marker to award marks to answers that are not fully consistent with the "model answer" set out in the marking scheme. In my view, this is a strength rather than weakness of the grading criteria.

The assessment processes are carried out in accordance with the institution's regulations and procedures

Methods of assessment are clearly detailed in the respective Module Outlines and the assessment processes scrupulously and rigorously conform to the institution's regulations and procedures.

Procedures governing mitigating/extenuating circumstances, academic integrity/ misconduct and borderline performances have been considered fairly and equitably applying institutional regulations

From all the information and documentation made available to me, as well as the deliberations undertaken at Exam Board meetings, I am fully satisfied that the existing arrangements relating to the procedures governing the issues outlined above, have resulted in just outcomes and even-handed decisions in the few instances that such matters have arisen. Additionally, External Examiners are always given the opportunity to: comment on the existing arrangements at INTO UEA; compare them with those existing in other HEIs; and to make recommendations to improve upon some of existing arrangements which leads to less desirable outcomes.

Comparability of Standards and Student Performance

Reflecting on your experience at other institutions please provide feedback on:

The comparability of standards and student achievement:

- **across the modules within a single programme**
- **across programmes within a single subject area in an awarding institution**
- **across programmes within a single subject area across institutions of which you have experience**
- **any of the above, across cohorts during your period of appointment**

Generally, the standards demonstrated by the students both in terms of coursework and final examinations are reasonably high. This is true both within and between programmes. Pass rates across the different modules are generally comparable with students at a similar level in other institutions.

INTO UEA continues to realize relatively high marks in Quantitative modules. This may have to do with the quality of the teaching at INTO UEA as well as the prior level of preparation of the students.

The overall distribution of marks was very good. While there were some quite outstanding marks and a few very low ones, the majority of students achieved a good mark.

In terms of comparison of student performance across cohorts, it appears that (on the face of it from the modules I examined) that the students' academic performance over the last two years is on an upward trajectory.

Enhancement of Quality

Please provide comment and recommendations on:

Good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment you have observed

INTO UEA teachers and facilitators continue to utilise of a wide range of methods and techniques (some of which are module specific) to facilitate better and innovative ways of learning, teaching and assessment. These include *inter alia* lectures/seminars/workshops; the use of Information & Communication Technology tools; innovative and creative projects.

Additionally, the use of course material and assessed assignments (for some modules) equivalent to those provided to students in the Norwich Business School and the School of Economics is laudable since it makes for a seamless transition for students from INTO UEA into the aforementioned departments as well as other established universities.

A key facilitator/contributor to the innovative and best practices adopted by teachers and facilitators is the support provided by the Partnership and Academic Support Offices.

Opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students

Presently the existing range of methods and techniques utilised by the Institute are consistent with best practice. Having said this however, I have no doubt that the Institute will seize upon every opportunity to increase the amount of interactive learning and direct participation of students in the process and to be at the frontier of innovation in learning and teaching wherever possible and practicable.

Also, please:

State whether you received sufficient evidence to enable your role to be fulfilled. If not, please provide details

In particular, the draft exam scripts have been sent to me on time and I was invited to make comments and recommendations on these as part of the quality control and academic processes aimed at ensuring that the final papers meet the required academic standards and the Institution's examination procedures.

An adequate sufficient sample of scripts for each of the modules and programmes for which I am responsible are made available to several hours before the start of the Board thus leaving sufficient time for the scripts to be checked. Mark sheets are also provided And the correspondences from the Student/Staff meetings and other relevant material are also made available to me for my perusal. The atmosphere is one that is conducive to interacting with staff, which facilitates the making of further queries, as needed, during the course of my duties as External Examiner. The timely provision of the documentation and exam material both prior to and on the day of the Exam Board is crucial to the successful execution of my duties and responsibilities.

State whether issues raised in the previous report(s) have been, or are being, addressed to your satisfaction

Yes, issues raised in previous reports have been reasonably addressed. Full credit must be given to the team at INTO UEA for their cooperation and responsiveness in addressing issues raised during my tenure as External Examiner.

Use this space to address any issues as specifically required by any relevant professional body

N/A

Give an overview of your term of office if this is your final year

My term of office (2015-2019) as an External Examiner for INTO UEA has been a rewarding experience. I have gotten the opportunity to interact with a group of professionals who deliver a high quality programme to students, while at the same time exchanging best practices which, I hope, mutually benefit INTO UEA and my own personal teaching practice.

The role has been very rewarding. Both academic and the support staff have been professional in the execution of their duties and responsibilities and have provided adequate support to enable me to effectively fulfil my role as an External Examiner. I have found Jeremy Moyle and his team to be highly receptive to new ideas and suggestions aimed at improving the delivery and quality of an already successful programme. Over the period, I have observed improvements in their delivery and administration of their programmes, which was already at a high standard. I wish INTO UEA every success for the future and I am confident that the program will progress in quality and effectiveness over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS, RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN

Please list your recommendations for action by the course team:

External Examiner's Recommendations for action <i>(to be completed by External Examiner)</i>	Course Team's Response (action to be taken and measurable outcomes) <i>(to be completed by Course Leader)</i>	By whom <i>(to be completed by Course Leader)</i>	By when <i>(to be completed by Course Leader)</i>
<p>No substantial recommendations for this year. High quality and standards of delivery evident across all modules.</p> <p>As can be expected, there remain minor elements which can be improved across individual modules eg. Improving the quality of referencing in reports/research-based modules and ensuring the all external examiner comments are taken into account on final drafts of exam papers.</p> <p>On the basis of my experience with the team at INTO UEA continuous efforts are always being made to improve their work.</p>	<p>External Examiner's comments and suggested revisions are automatically passed on to module leaders for consideration and included where deemed appropriate. Many thanks for all help and advice given over your tenure (PT)</p>	<p>Foundation Economics module leader/Programme Manager</p>	<p>ongoing</p>

Report completed by:

Signature

Dr Robert Mullings

Date: 27th/08/2019

COURSE TEAM'S GENERAL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

No specific actions recommended in this report. We aim to continue to innovate and exemplify best practice in future as highlighted here. (PT, KR, SG)

Responses and Action Plan completed by:

Course Leader:

Paul Thompson, Kathryn Roe,
Stuart Graham

Date: 01/11/2019

(Please print name and sign)

Countersigned by:

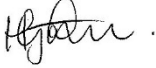
Head of HE (or
equivalent)

Jeremy Moyle


Date:

1/11/19

To be completed by the Partnerships Office:

A	No action identified	
B	Identified action and picked up appropriately	X
C	Identified action and not picked up appropriately or action not identified	
 H Jackson Assistant Head of Partnerships 12 November 2019		

To be completed by Academic Director of Partnerships

A	No action identified	
B	Identified action and picked up appropriately	X
C	Identified action and not picked up appropriately or action not identified	
 Professor Ian Dewing Academic Director of Partnerships 13 November 2019		