

ANNUAL EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT

Name of Institution Examined: INTO UEA

Faculty/School: _____

Course Title(s): International Foundation Business and Humanities, and International Foundation Science and Mathematics

Academic Year: 2020-21

External Examiner Name: Dr Christopher D Murphy

External Examiner's home University / College or Other Professional / Institutional Affiliation: University of York

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)?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Programme regulations (these may be in the programme handbook)?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Module descriptions (these may be in the programme handbook)?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Assessment briefs/marketing criteria?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Draft examination papers

a. (i) Did you receive all the draft papers?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) If not, was this at your request?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

- b. (i) Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate? X
- (ii) If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments? X
- c. Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments? X

Marking examination scripts

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

Dissertations/project reports

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

Coursework/continuously assessed work

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

Orals/performances/recitals/appropriate professional placements

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

Final examiners' meeting

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

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 programmes are indeed coherent and the learning outcomes are well-aligned to the qualification descriptor. The syllabus provides a good substitute to the A-level maths and physics content which would ordinarily be required for entry to physics degree programmes across the England and Wales.

The programme reflects appropriate PSRB requirements where applicable

Not applicable at the Foundation level.

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

The subjects covered is well-aligned with foundation programmes in physics and mathematics at other UK HEIs. The addition of a geophysics and meteorology module gives the programme a unique flavour, specific to UEA without diluting the core content.

The curriculum is current

The curriculum is indeed current.

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

The assessment criteria are robust and the mark schemes are clear and appropriate. The grading is appropriate for progression. Classification is less relevant for Foundation level modules.

Please provide feedback on whether:

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

Assessment types include exams, assessments and experimental write-ups which are entirely appropriate for the subject and students at this level of study.

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

The marking schemes have been properly and consistently applied throughout with appropriate vetting and moderation to ensure parity and that the marking is free from errors.

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

All processes are carried out in accordance with the relevant regulations and procedures.

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

This year there were cases of misconduct but these have been considered fairly. Mitigating circumstances are considered in an appropriate way with some leniency being shown in recognition of the challenges associated with teaching and learning during the pandemic.

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

This was a rather small cohort with one of the modules only being sat by one student. The numbers in general were fairly small and so, as a result, it is rather difficult to make statements across the board. It is true that there were particularly strong students and some students who were weaker. This is rather typical based on last year and my experience of foundation programmes more generally. In fulfilling a remit of widening participation, it is inevitable that the level of preparedness for the programme will vary strongly across a cohort. The bimodal distribution of results which sometimes appear on these types of programmes is not uncommon in my experience.

Enhancement of Quality

Please provide comment and recommendations on:

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

The double-marking of exams is excellent both in terms of correcting mistakes, but also demonstrating the discussion about the choice of marks awarded.

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

The modules assessed here are of very high quality. The exams were conducted with a high level of rigour – particularly impressive during the pandemic.

If online exams are to continue, and with some exams including multiple choice sections, one wonders whether or not an automatically marked online submission might be employed. This would reduce the workload and – by randomising question order – provide an exam which is even more robust to collusion.

Also, please:

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

Sufficient evidence was provided to enable me to fulfil my role, although smooth communication has been challenged by pandemic-related issues.

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

Recommendations have been addressed, but I would encourage staff to ensure that documentation on programme specification is appropriately linked to the relevant student resources and updated to reflect any changes brought about by the pandemic (which will persist) when time allows.

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

None.

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

N/A

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>	Progress as of February 20__ <i>(to be completed by Course Leader)</i>	Progress as of end of Year <i>(to be completed by Course Leader)</i>
<p>Consideration be given to changes implemented during Covid-19 and to whether such modifications should persist.</p>	<p>Online exams will persist, as per UEA regs. Other modifications will be discussed within team accordingly</p>	<p>DW, PB</p>	<p>Dec 2021</p>	<p>Online testing retained along with current method of handwritten answers and marking for all sections of paper (potential confusion for MCQs through Bb and rest of qns separately)</p>	
<p>Communication has been sufficient this year, but could be improved. Perhaps an action log or 'status' spreadsheet of assessments could identify delays in responses (from</p>	<p>As Chris suggests, this may have been a bit of pandemic overwhelm in keeping track of things, but a good idea nonetheless for all</p>	<p>DW, PB and AST</p>	<p>Mar 2022</p>	<p>No problems experienced this year with usual approach</p>	

<p>both internal and external parties) early. Such a sheet might include e.g. tick boxes for when an assessment has been: written, internally vetted, externally vetted and commented, comments responded to).</p> <p>This recommendation may not persist 'post-lockdown'.</p>	<p>programmes. Explore central system for this with AST and/or new PM.</p>			<p>and continued resourcing issues/ overwhelm. However, will look at a logging system for moderation as part of moderation guidelines review for Sept 2022</p>	

Report completed by:

Signature

Christopher D Murphy

Date: 17/7/21

COURSE TEAM'S GENERAL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Many thanks to Chris for his helpful comments and feedback on the modules and assessments!

Responses and Action Plan completed by:

Course Leader:

Date:

(Please print name and sign)

Countersigned by:

Head of HE (or equivalent)

Jeremy Moyle

Date:

26/10/21

MID-YEAR REVIEW OF ACTIONS (FEBRUARY 20)

To be completed by Course Leader:

Mid-Year Review of Actions Completed:	Signature: DW	Date: 17/06/22
External Examiner Notified:	Signature:	Date:

YEAR END REVIEW OF ACTIONS (MONTH 20)

To be completed by Course Leader:

Year End Review of Actions Completed:	Signature:	Date:
External Examiner Notified:	Signature:	Date:

To be completed by the Academic Partnerships:

A	No action identified	
B	Identified action and picked up appropriately	
C	Identified action and not picked up appropriately or action not identified	

To be completed by Academic Director of Partnerships:

A	No action identified	
B	Identified action and picked up appropriately	
C	Identified action and not picked up appropriately or action not identified	

DOCUMENT OWNER: Academic Partnerships

DOCUMENT TYPE: Form

APPROVED BY: Academic Partnerships

VERSION NUMBER: 2

DUE FOR REVIEW: June 2020

VERSION LOG:

Date	Version no.	Summary of changes	Author	Approved by
May 2019	2	Updated to include table for mid-year review of action plan	Academic Partnerships	Academic Partnerships