

External Examiners' Report

2020-2021

Proforma

General details	
Subject	Contract Law (GDL & MA in Law)
Name of external examiner	Ian King
Date of report	10 th August 2021

1 Academic Issues	
1.1 Were the standards of the questions set at the appropriate level?	YES
<p>Please comment.</p> <p>The standard of the questions in all the assessments I have approved this year were entirely appropriate for the level of study. There was appropriate depth and coverage in all the assessments that I looked at for both GDL and MA. As last year, the arrangements for online time limited exams due to the Covid-19 pandemic worked well and, in my view, did not impact upon the fairness or rigour of the assessments.</p>	
1.2 Were the assessments well-designed? i.e. did they assess appropriately the learning outcomes set for the course.	YES
<p>Please comment.</p> <p>All the assessments I approved contained a good mix of problem and essay style questions. A good variety of topics were covered in the assessments to provide a fair and suitably rigorous test for the students.</p> <p>As last year, the sample size from each centre was small but the performance of the students whose scripts I saw certainly suggested that the learning outcomes were properly and fairly assessed. Overall, assessment design remains a strength of the UoL programme.</p>	

1.3 Was the standard of performance attained by candidates in general at an appropriate level?	YES
<p>Please comment</p> <p>The standard of performance in Contract across all centres was very good, although for the GDL slightly down on the previous year. The overall pass rate for students having their first attempt was 80.4% compared to 95.6% last year, although this is still higher than the 78.2% in 2019. On MA Law the pass rate was slightly higher than in 2020 at 91.1% compared to 90.9% in 2020 and 88% in 2019. As always there was some variation between centres, with Birmingham performing slightly worse than the average and other centres in both GDL (68.6% pass rate) and MA Law (72.2% pass rate). As last year, the pass rates on the MA were slightly higher which may reflect a different type of cohort. The pass rates and mean marks for Contract overall were very much in line with other subjects which is reassuring.</p> <p>Overall, the standard of performance attained by the students was very pleasing in such difficult circumstances and reflects well on the students and the staff.</p>	
1.4 Was the method and general standard of marking satisfactory and consistent?	YES
<p>Please comment</p> <p>The marking standards across the different centres were very consistent suggesting again that the new marking guidance introduced last year is continuing to be effective. As commented last year, this is a very positive development as it is difficult to maintain high levels of consistency across so many centres and with such large student numbers. The internal moderation process works very effectively in this regard.</p>	

2 Administrative Issues: please make any comments you wish to make on:

2.1 The process of setting assessments.	2.1 The assessments setting was, as in previous years, rigorous and efficient. The level of detailed internal scrutiny was more consistent this year which is a positive development. I received all draft assessments in a very timely manner providing me with plenty of opportunity for scrutiny.
2.2 The administration of assessments.	2.2 The administration of the assessments has again been very efficient. The admin teams at the different centres were very efficient in sending me sample scripts for moderation and dealing with any queries that I had.

2.3 The moderation process.	2.3 There was clear evidence of internal moderation on the scripts that I received. As was the case last year, the number of scripts received was less than in previous years and again this made the workload much more manageable, although it was less easy to make definitive judgements on standards.
2.4 The conduct of the Examination Board.	2.4 I attended the Zoom Examination Board on 22 nd July 2020 and was impressed as always by the efficiency and thoroughness of the way business was conducted. Decisions on individual students were made fairly and after thorough discussion and the views of external examiners were fully considered.
2.5 Procedures relating to candidates with special needs/concessions	2.5 The examination board dealt with concessions fairly and after thorough discussion.
2.6 Any other procedural issues.	2.6 No additional comments

3 Quality Assurance Issues	
3.1 Were assessment policies and your duties as external examiner adequately explained to you?	YES
3.2 Did you have adequate briefing and guidance sufficient for you to fulfil your role effectively as an external examiner?	YES
3.3 Did you have adequate access to any material needed (including assessment regulations, student handbook, programme specification and module descriptors) to make the required judgements?	YES
3.4 Were your comments during the assessment process and at the Examination Board considered appropriately	YES
3.5 Has appropriate action been taken in respect of comments made in your last examiner's report?	N/A
Please make any comments you wish to make on the above points.	
No further comments.	

<p>4. Areas of good practice</p> <p>Please provide a description or bullet point list of any particular areas of good practice in relation to standards and assessment processes that would be worthy of dissemination to a wider audience.</p> <p>I would particularly commend the efficiency and helpfulness of the admin teams at all centres. They make what could be a very fraught and stressful moderation period as easy and pleasant as possible bearing in mind the number of students and centres involved.</p>
<p>5. Other comments</p> <p>Please comment on any other issues which you wish to raise</p> <p>N/A</p>

Signed: Ian D King