



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

College of Life and Environmental
Sciences

School of Geography, Earth
and Environmental Sciences

Website <http://www.gees.bham.ac.uk>

Head of School
Professor [REDACTED]

6th August 2012

Professor [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Re: Response to External Examiner Reports

I am writing to thank you for all your efforts on our behalf over the last year and your detailed and thoughtful feedback on the report form. Several of the issues you highlighted will be tabled for discussion by the School Education Committee, which next meets next academic session, but all require an immediate response. I will address each issue in turn, but not necessarily in the order they were listed in your report:

Separate marking criteria for essay style, practical reports and exams along with more info on the detail of what is required would be valued by students.

This will be tabled as an agenda item for discussion at the School Education Committee meeting in the coming session.

In some cases better annotation on moderated scripts would allow external examiners to better evaluate moderation procedures.

To ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities as regards marking and moderating protocols for the forthcoming academic year training sessions will be run by the exams officer. It is hoped this will lead to much greater consistency in the marking and moderation process.

Contd.

From meeting with students - more generic feedback on assessments and more tutorials / revision clinics would be appreciated.

Module leaders provide generic feedback on Level 1 and 2 exam papers via a report that is placed on WebCT. All students have access to this and so can readily see what resulted in good or poor marks on each question. Those students who have failed modules are particularly advised to access this material in the end of year progress review tutorial. There are currently no plans to increase tutorial content, however, it should be noted that all students can access staff with problems about modules or revision queries via the office hour system.

Module with significant GIS and remote sensing component would be useful. Improved coverage of research methodologies as opposed to focus on individual techniques would help students in undertaking their final year research project.

EVS students will be taking the 2nd year Geomatics course from the start of the new academic year. It should also be noted that a new member of staff with GIS/RS skills will be joining the School in March 2013. The intention is thus to have new module content covering these topics for the academic year 2013/14.

Once again many thanks for all your input, we have greatly valued your constructive comments over the past year.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.