

EXTERNAL EXAMINING OVERVIEW: UNDERGRADUATE PROVISION REPORT FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/21

1. Background

- 1.1. This report is a summary of the main items at faculty and university level identified in external examiners' reports for undergraduate provision. The scope of the report covers all reports received to date (see statistical data regarding report completion in [Annex A](#)).
- 1.2. The external examiner report form template for 2020/21 had been amended to reflect online teaching, assessment and examination boards. This included a specific question asking external examiners to confirm that the processes put in place by the University were 'sound and fairly conducted'.
- 1.3. This annual external examining overview report is produced by Quality Assurance for Faculty Education Committees and Quality and Academic Standards Sub-Committee, who are invited to comment on the report before it is approved by the University Education Committee. The report will form part of the Education Report submitted to Senate. A final version of the overview report is due in May 2022 once external examiner reports for postgraduate programmes have been received.
- 1.4. Rather than an action plan, the 2019/20 overview report offered a series of suggestions for schools and programme teams and an update on these is given in section 3. Section 4 looks at how the University has continued to respond to the pandemic and hybrid methods of teaching, section 5 covers the main issues identified by external examiners for 2020/21 and section 6 has suggested actions.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. Keele University is committed to the safeguarding and enhancement of its academic standards. In this endeavour, the University's external examiners play a vital role by ensuring that the quality and standards of the academic provision and the learning opportunities provided to students are comparable to those in other UK higher education institutions.
- 2.2. All undergraduate external examiners are asked to provide a detailed written report, using a standard university template, within four weeks of the examination board. In line with the Code of Practice on External Examining, Schools have delegated authority to approve responses to external examiner reports to enable a timely response to be sent to the external examiner.
- 2.3. The University expects Schools to respond quickly and appropriately to all recommendations made by external examiners and to give full and thoughtful consideration to suggestions for further enhancement. Feedback from external examiners informs the reflective discussions at School and Faculty level and supports the enhancement and development of assessment practices and the taught curriculum.
- 2.4. In addition to Schools' engagement with the feedback from their external examiners, the University recognises that there is a need to take a collective overview of issues which emerge from the reports and which may assist the University in identifying wider concerns and in disseminating good practice. This overview function is undertaken by Quality Assurance, which scrutinises all external examiner reports for critical issues and emerging themes.

3. Update on suggested actions from last year's overview report

- 3.1. The 2019/20 overview report gave a series of suggestions for programme teams and Schools to consider based on a collation of areas of good practice that external examiners had commented on or requests received via reports.
- 3.2. The suggestions, which continue to be relevant on an ongoing basis, were as follows:
- **Variety of assessments**
External examiners commented on the wide variety of assessment tasks on the modules including consultancy reports, research proposals, creative materials and campaign leaflets, which suit a wide range of learning styles and link to employability skills.
 - **Moderation**
A number of external examiners made recommendations regarding moderation practices. Schools might wish to consider the moderation practices used within their programmes and how these align with the Marking and Moderation Policy, recognising that the move to online marking may have impacted on previously used practices.
 - **Generic Assessment Criteria**
This suggestion is twofold and includes aspects for the University and also programme teams.
 - 1) In relation to University processes, external examiners noted in some instances that students awarded 80 or 90 would, at comparable universities, have scored in the high 70s.
 - 2) In many cases, Schools and programmes have produced module-specific criteria. In praising this, external examiners noted that in some modules that were not assessing using traditional academic style essays, bespoke specific marking criteria had been developed and encouraged other modules to do likewise, mapping to learning outcomes.
- 3.3. The suggestions were considered at Faculty Education Committee meetings with all committees noting the positive feedback from external examiners.
- 3.4. Within the 2020/21 reports, external examiners commented on moderation processes suggesting schools had acted upon the suggestion in the 2019/20 overview report;
- *"The moderation was detailed and careful, and really adds to the quality of these courses"* [Foundation Year (Science and Health)]
 - *"I have been impressed with the range of assessment and the quality of marking and feedback"* [Sociology]
 - *"The marking and moderation process is rigorous, clear and transparent. The moderation report was very detailed outlining positive feedback and areas for improvement for each module."* [Nursing Associate]
 - *"It was pleasing to see moderation forms being used for most modules"* [Forensic Science]
 - *"The design of assessments and the guidelines, communication of expectations, and support for these all point towards the rigorous, fair and equitable assessment processes, and this is also reflected in the marking. There appears to be some variation in the way in which moderation is carried out. This does not represent a significant concern, but while there seems to have been a clear and positive*

development in relation to this process, which responds effectively to the 19/20 External Examiner's report, there is also scope for further constructive and reflective development." [Foundation Year (Humanities and Social Science)]

- *"There was good evidence of marking and moderation throughout the modules. I found some marks for final year projects to be on the generous side."* [Biology]

4. How the University continued to respond to the pandemic and hybrid teaching

4.1. All programmes had planned in situ teaching sessions running in semester 1 and variations to the programmes had been shared with students. The University responded to the changing national restrictions in place and teaching was necessarily moved online for the majority of students, other than those on certain professionally regulated programmes. As in 2019/20, the University put in place safety net measures regarding progression and awards due to the disruption to students' studies and external examiner feedback on these are covered later in the report.

4.2. External examiners were asked whether, in their view, 'the processes put in place by the University in response to assessment, examination and the determination of awards in light of Covid-19 were sound and fairly conducted'. There was unanimous support for the approach taken by the University and external examiners' comments included:

- *"As External Examiner, I was kept informed of changes and asked for my opinion at all stages. Sometimes changes needed to be implemented at very short notice – nevertheless the EEs were included in all correspondence and we had several online interim meetings to be fully briefed and approve all assessment-related changes."* [Medicine (Year 1)]
- *"Assessments processes have been flexible and responsive. Maintaining standards, skills and safety have been the most successful outcomes against a backdrop of health and political uncertainty."* [Mental Health Nursing]
- *"The systems for assessment and processing of results are robust and I am satisfied that students are being treated fairly in the context of the impact of the pandemic on their learning / progress. The measures for the determination of awards are clear and in line with adjustments in practice elsewhere in the sector."* [Human Geography]
- *"I was impressed by how hard colleagues have worked to adapt assessments so that students were able to flex a range of intellectual muscles and perform to a high standard, even in the context of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic."* [History]
- *"In a difficult year of constant change it seems that the assessment strategy was communicated to students well (although a number of students were frustrated by the delay in these communications). That said, it does not seem to of inadvertently affected any student."* [Pharmacy]
- *"I note many examples of where good adaptations have been put in place. I also met students and they raised with me the excellent approach which had been taken to help them in the current covid circumstances, whilst being fair to the organisation."* [Radiography]
- *"It was evident from the samples sent to me that additional procedures had been put in place to help students cope with the constraints required because of covid. These included developing alternative assessments where appropriate, providing generous opportunities for extensions, and providing plenty of additional support and advice."* [Politics]
- *"Colleagues were given an opportunity in the end-of-year Exam Board to highlight some of these changes and to reflect on the changes to teaching and assessment modes. This kind of reflective practice is valuable."* [History]
- *"The university appears to have given careful consideration to the current situation and implemented fair and consistent measures."* [Applied Biomedical Science]

- *“The measures put into place are in line with those being applied in other institutions within the UK and provided the best possible, fair, outcome for the students while maintaining HEQ standards.”* [Biomedical Science]

Additional guidance had been included on the website¹ for external examiners, which included the processing of marks and awards for finalists. It is evident from external examiner comments that they felt the measures that were taken were appropriate and fair.

- 4.3. Each year external examiners are asked to comment on whether they feel assessments were conducted rigorously, fairly and with due consideration for the equitable treatment of students.

Comments from external examiners related to the changes to assessment included:

- *“The range of assessment types is varied and tests different skills, from academic writing, programming, composition, recording, sound design and interactive music. These are all in line with assessments for similar courses across the UK.”* [Music Technology]
- *“There is a wide range of assessments including continuous assessment, oral and poster presentations, literature surveys, laboratory experiments and research projects, as well as written open-book examinations.”* [Chemistry]
- *“It is obvious that the tutors spend a lot of time on the design, marking and moderation of all assessments.”* [German]
- *“As was the case last year, care has been taken by the academic team in the School to ensure that changed assessment types and procedures necessitated by the on-going coronavirus pandemic have been implemented in a way that is as fair as possible to the entire student cohort. Appropriate allowances have been made to account for the particular difficulties that students have faced this year.”* [Geology & Geoscience]

- 4.4. All examination boards were conducted online through Microsoft Teams. A number of external examiners reported issues with accessing the meeting and in some instances, were unable to attend due to technical issues which were taken up with IT. In these instances, the external examiners were able to see the exam board reports and speak with the schools. External examiners praised the work done by programme teams and professional services staff in ensuring the smooth running of the boards; *“We have now had two years of online boards. These have been efficiently run and this must be commended. Especially as I am all too aware that this is not the case everywhere.”* [Education]

- 4.5. The report template included a specific question entitled ‘Response to the challenges presented by Covid-19’ and asked examiners whether they felt the measures put in place by the University and the steps and implementation by the School struck an appropriate balance between maintaining high academic standards and support for students; whether the University had been able to strike an appropriate balance between upholding academic standards and fair treatment of students; and whether the safety net created by the University for its students been as fair and equitable as could be achieved under these circumstances.

- 4.6. External examiners agreed that the measures adopted had struck an appropriate balance between maintaining high academic standards and support and fair treatment of students:
- *“The assessments have all been conducted fairly, and rigorously. The processes put in place during Covid have not affected this adversely, and in some cases may*

¹ <https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/examinationboards/>

have resulted in supporting students to meet the required learning outcomes more effectively than previous assessment methods.” [Neuroscience]

- *“There is no evidence that students were disadvantaged by the circumstances presented by the pandemic. This was discussed in the board and it was made clear that the work we were considering had not been affected. I was assured that practices had been systematically conducted in line with University policy. The outcomes for all students appear fair and maintain the integrity of the programme.” [Liberal Arts]*

4.7. Ahead of the examination boards, the University agreed specific mitigation strategies or safety nets which were shared with external examiners and referred to in the examination board. External examiners had the following observation *“Assessments were changed in order to lessen the burden on students at an incredibly stressful time. At the same time, a rigorous programme of assessments was maintained. This was not the case at all universities, where assessments were reduced to a considerable extent. In my view, Keele got the balance right in this respect.” [History]*

4.8. In addition to the positives noted, external examiners also raised concerns with the safety net in terms of future implications the University might wish to consider:

- *“The safety net approach appears overly generous using both module marks which can be enhanced as well as overall grade, the increase of the compensation grade has undoubtedly provided some students with a grade higher than the profile would normally suggest especially some of those gaining firsts and 2.1s.” [Forensic Science]*
- *“I felt the Covid-19 measures were generally fair and appropriate. I do agree with the students I met that the safety net allowing a student who failed to have a second attempt but a student who passed not to may not have been equitable between students who typically achieve very different marks. A student who typically achieves 50% and dropped their performance by 15% due to covid would have an advantage over a student who typically achieved 65% and dropped their performance by 15%.” [Biology]*
- *“The safety-net that Keele has introduced has enabled typically weaker-performing students to progress and graduate under the unprecedented circumstances. However, I do fear that this is delaying or exacerbating a deeper problem of the competence of such students progressing towards much harder and more self-driven research based learning at Level 6.” [Physical Geography]*

5. Main items for 2020/21 highlighted by External Examiners

5.1. Academic standards

5.1.1. External examiners were unanimous in their confirmation that the standards set for the awards were appropriate, student performance was comparable with similar programmes they were familiar with, that students were given the opportunity to achieve beyond the threshold standards and that the processes for assessment, examination and determination of awards were sound and fairly conducted.

5.1.2. External examiners noted changes to assessments appeared to be beneficial for students: *“The choice of assessments on the undergraduate and postgraduate history programmes is impressive. While some of this is a result of the pandemic — forcing changes to longstanding approaches — I would recommend that some of it stays in place post-pandemic.” [History]* and *“Is there still a place for the traditional unseen exam paper within the Geography programmes in a post-covid context? The ‘replacement’ exercises this year seem to have been well-received by students (at least*

in the 3rd year), and I would hope that a strong justification is used where examinations return to the assessment process.” [Physical Geography]

- 5.1.3. Concerns were raised surrounding the duration of online exams: *“a time slot of 48h per exam is too long both for student mental wellbeing and increasing of collusion problems” [Chemistry], “If online examinations are set to continue, I hope that the University will reconsider how to best to deal with collusion and misconduct (and support the department more in their attempts to protect their assessments from cheating)” [Chemistry] and “I would encourage some careful thought about support for students in the event of a return to in-person, closed book examinations. Next year the cohorts at levels 4 and 5 will not have taken a summative exam since GCSE or equivalent, the cohort at level 6 will not have taken closed book exams at university, and the cohort at level 7 will not have taken closed book exams since level 4. All these students are likely to need greater support in preparation for examinations and may benefit from some additional ‘safety net’ arrangement as a result.” [Mathematics]*
- 5.1.4. A number of external examiners highlighted potential risks with the impacts of the University’s borderline rules and the impacts these could have on grade inflation:
- *“The ‘automatic promotion’ to class 1 and class 2:1 at 67.5 and 57.5 % was very generous: students could be awarded a first-class degree without achieving any truly first-class marks. However, this imposition of a ‘cliff edge’ rather than a borderline may have disadvantaged students scoring say 67.3% as we could not examine these scripts to look for extra marks (as we would expect to do if ‘borderline’ rules were in play).” [Chemistry]*
 - *“The measures put in place by the university this year, as observed at the examination boards, were appropriate for student support. The Additional Calculation, using only semester 1 2019-20 marks to catch the effect of Covid disruption on individual students was appropriate, however this combined with the use of rounded marks for grade boundaries will contribute to classification inflation in affected cohorts.” [Natural Sciences]*
 - *“As an observation, the combination of the weighted average module mark system, ACM and the automatic raising of borderline cases does result in ‘uplift’ to marks for certain students that might not have been apparent in ‘normal’ years. That said, I do not see any reduction in academic standards and students are being treated fairly and equitably. I note that the guidance to the Board is unequivocal and the provision of FAQs for students means these measures are being applied in a transparent manner for those on the receiving end.” [Human Geography]*
 - *“The procedures put in place seem to have worked well, and while the awarded marks might seem slightly raised compared to previous years it’s worth considering how the assessment format might actually be allowing people to better demonstrate their ability to meet learning outcomes.” [Neuroscience]*
 - *“I think that the borderline zone of up to 3% below the class boundary and the need for only 50% of credits in the higher class in order to gain promotion, are both more generous than in most other institutions in the UK, and should be reviewed.” [Chemistry]*

5.2. Quality of Teaching

- 5.2.1. External examiners across the Faculties commented positively on the quality of teaching and the students’ learning environment, as noted in the following comments:
- *“This level of engagement is a strong indication of excellent teaching quality. It is abundantly clear that students are not afraid of challenging material and that they are being enabled in carrying their learning with them from module to module.” [Media, Communications and Creative Practice]*

- *“The work that I saw clearly demonstrated high standards of teaching and learning. Courses were designed with care and thoughtfulness to provide students with clear, logical and structured pathways through the material ... The staff are clearly committed to the student experience and design courses to engage the students and provide a range of responses.”* [Film Studies]

5.2.2. Use of online methods to deliver materials and the information available to students was praised by a number of external examiners, as noted in the following comments:

- *“As HE has switched to online delivery for the most part this past academic year, it is no surprise to find excellent online resources ... The time academic staff have taken to prepare these resources has ensured that all students are fully supported given the restrictions all have been working under.”* [Music Technology]
- *“Staff responded brilliantly to the challenges of blended learning, using creative methods to keep students engaged and supported across all their modules, and going the extra mile to ensure that students understood what they needed to do and were helped to achieve their best in a carefully structured way ... One aspect of this – and a particularly important one this year - is the way the VLE is used: colleagues consistently provide easily accessible, beautifully clear guidance for each module through the use of student handbooks; online resources are well designed, succinct, and practically useful; and online teaching tools are used in a thoroughgoing way, linked to the assessment.”* [English Literature]
- *“Excellent use of AV facilities and electronic media essential to cope with the demands of distance learning.”* [Forensic Science]
- *“The online environment continues to be a rich source of learning material. A review of course material confirms that it continues to deliver a diverse range, which is reflected in the excellent performance of students on both programmes.”* [Pharmaceutical Science, Technology and Business]
- *“The teaching and learning environment is outstanding in its quality, not just because of the delivery but also the support offered by way of feedback via various routes to the students. I also note the variety (across all modules) of means of delivery – including mixtures of (i) extended assignments (ii) regular weekly ‘work programmes’ uploaded to the module page on KLE (iii) high-quality pre-recorded lectures – in addition to more standard means of delivery, making the cross-section of learning activity very varied and interesting for any individual student.”* [Mathematics]

5.3. Meeting with students

5.3.1. Almost a third of external examiners reported being able to meet with students online and praised both the students and also the opportunity to do so:

- *“The meeting with students was most useful this academic year. What was most evident in talking with students was the commitment and dedication of the Music and Music Technology team to their students.”* [Music Technology]
- *“I appreciated the opportunity to meet online with three students from this year’s cohort. This provided a valuable insight into the students’ experience of teaching and learning, including assessment”* [Foundation Year (Humanities and Social Sciences)]

5.4. Support given by Keele staff

5.4.1. External examiners were effusive in their comments regarding the support staff had shown students throughout the past year, whilst this is always noted under areas of good practice, the comments this year included recognition of the additional work that had been undertaken and the pressures staff were under:

- *“I am very impressed with the sheer volume of work and commitment that the programme team have undertaken to adapt teaching in order to cope with the uncertainties associated with covid-19 ... it is something that the students recognise and respect. Academic standards have been maintained, and individual staff members*

have innovated to make the best of a large-scale enforced shift towards online delivery and learning.” [Physical Geography]

- *“The staff support for students has been exemplary and they have gone to great lengths to ensure that laboratory-based classes and research projects have been carried out (students have had access to more time in the lab than at many other universities) and carried out safely.”* [Chemistry]
- *“I want to put on record that academic and Professional Services colleagues at Keele, as elsewhere, have been under quite extreme pressure – as in some senses have students – and they are to be commended for their dedication to the students, the institution and their discipline.”* [Business Management]
- *“I wish to praise the academic and support staff in the School for the additional efforts that they have made to ensure that the taught programmes have been able to run as effectively as could be reasonably expected under the difficult circumstances.”* [Geology & Geoscience]
- *“I congratulate the programme team for the quality of learning, teaching and assessment this year under very challenging circumstances. It is very clear just how much work and commitment from the teaching staff has gone into module preparation and delivery, and that the support that is given to students is very much appreciated by those we were able to meet and talk with.”* [Physical Geography]
- *“I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of the Sociology staff in supporting the students.”* [Sociology]
- *“This has been a very challenging year for both students and staff. However, it is clear that you have managed to maintain a very high standard of teaching and learning for students. This is a reflection of the huge amount of dedication and commitment from staff in adapting to new ways of working and ensuring the best possible outcomes for students during the pandemic.”* [Applied Biomedical Science]
- *“I feel the staff have worked tremendously well in these difficult times to ensure academic standards are maintained, support is provided to the students and this is reflected in the student achievements.”* [Computer Science]
- *“I would like to thank the administrative and ICT staff who have also had to adapt their working practices this year in order to keep me informed and included in the assessment process.”* [Learning Disabilities Nursing]

5.4.2. External examiners made reference to the pressures schools were under due to staffing changes over the summer and the impacts these had on their roles whilst continuing to praise the efforts of staff for doing all they could to assist them:

- *“It is my view that this loss of administrative support and the consequent additional burden that has been placed on the academic team cannot be sustained in future years: the workload is simply too great. I urge the University to address this issue as a matter of urgency before next academic year: additional administrative support should be provided to assist in the assembly of all the material required for the assessment, examination and award processes.”* [Geology & Geoscience]
- *“It seemed clear that there were challenges in the resources and organisation of programme administration. This is in no way a criticism of the individuals who made any External review possible but it did seem that resources and organisation were a problem and this will need addressing if it is not to affect the student assessment and quality standards system negatively.”* [International Governance and Public Policy]
- *“The students have been prioritised, but it is to be recognised this has increased the workload for staff, who have been pressurised by the requirements, especially over the summer months.”* [Midwifery]

5.5. Issues noted with Keele IT systems

5.5.1. External examiners shared their frustrations with the changes to authentication for Keele emails and accessing items on the KLE. There was one external who resigned their position due to difficulties with IT and another noted; *“Invitation and info regarding the*

- *“The feedback given to students is outstanding. They receive detailed commentary in the form of annotations and summary comments, with the same structuring pattern of ‘Things you’ve done well’ ‘Things you need to improve/ develop’ used by all staff. This has undoubtedly supported students in understanding how they can improve. I also observed excellent practice in formative feedback, including comments on message boards and online consultations/ office hours.”* [English Literature]
- *“Students are provided with sufficient and regular feedback upon request and are offered ample opportunity to discuss their progress with the tutor during office hours. Students appear to be very pleased with this aspect of their modules”* [Russian]

5.7. Comments from Examiners at the end of their role

5.7.1. Examiners coming to the end of their role are given the opportunity to provide an overview of the time as an external examiner; the following comments show how examiners have found their experience with Keele:

- *“I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone in the School for their unwavering commitment to providing students with a first-class legal education. In the last four years I have had the pleasure to look after both ‘traditional’ and ‘innovative’ modules and I have been equally impressed both by the thoughtfulness and passion that goes into the construction of modules and syllabi and by the precision with which assessments are set and marked.”* [Law]
- *“External examining duties at your excellent institution have been a pleasure and great educational experience for me. My thanks for a warm welcome and for the excellent processes, which have made my life much easier. I have been able to use my experiences of good practice to improve the course at my own institution, and hope that my involvement at Keele has been helpful.”* [Medicine (Year 3)]
- *“I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as external examiner to the criminology programmes and I have learned a lot. The team have faced considerable challenges in this time and yet continue to provide an exemplary educational experience.”* [Criminology]
- *“The team are clearly dedicated to the programme, and despite some major impacts on the teaching staff with a large expansion of the programme, they have always maintained their commitment to the education of their students. There have been some really innovative approaches taken on the programme, such as teaching being delivered by student groups in some modules. The students clearly enjoy the programme, and value the teaching staff very highly.”* [Neuroscience]
- *“It has been a pleasure to serve a term as an external examiner for Keele Management School. While the past 15 months have been challenging for all, this has not impacted negatively on the professionalism, good organisation, and academic standard of the School and their communication with me.”* [Business Economics, Economics, Finance]
- *“I thank all staff for their unwavering commitment to pursuing and maintaining academic excellence in the arrangement, subject range and delivery of their undergraduate teaching portfolio. The administrative support throughout has been outstanding and has been a substantial and significant help in ensuring careful observance of all rules and regulations (which have always been followed precisely), especially during these difficult Covid-driven times. ... may I end my tenure of office by saying that above all there is one feature that this department excels at and has never once wavered from – and that is its complete and utter dedication to its students. The basic fact of the matter is this: without our students – undergraduate and postgraduate - we do not have a department. These students should always be nurtured, looked after and offered the very best teaching and learning facilities and opportunities available during their period of registered study, and Keele is demonstrably in the elite category when it comes to doing this.”* [Mathematics]

6. Suggested actions to be considered by Schools and programme teams

- 6.1. Below are a series of suggestions the University, Schools and programme teams may wish to consider. These are collated from the external examiner reports:

Suggestion 1: support for lower achieving students

External examiners noted that some students will not have experienced open book examinations for a number of years or truly experienced independent learning at a degree level. Schools may wish to consider, if they do not already do so, forms of formative assessment.

Suggestion 2: timed examinations

External examiners raised concerns with support for students and the duration of online examinations. Schools may wish to consider the support needs of students taking online exams and mitigating risks relating to academic misconduct, such as collusion.

Suggestion 3: potential future impacts due to the safety net and degree classifications

This suggestion is twofold and includes aspects for the University and also programme teams.

- 1) Whilst external examiners supported the safety net, some raised concerns with the impact that could happen in the future with students progressing who in previous years may not have done. Schools may wish to consider the support offered to students and monitor lower performing students.
- 2) The University has recently approved changes to degree algorithms which will be in place for students commencing in 2022. The University may wish to keep under review the impacts of the safety nets on degree classification and grade inflation.

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Annex A: Contextual data for undergraduate provision in 2020/21

1.1. Report completion (at the time of writing)

Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	36 out of 39 reports (92%)
Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences	24 out of 28 reports (86%)
Faculty of Natural Sciences	29 out of 32 reports (91%)
TOTAL	90 out of 99 reports submitted (91%)*

**this compares with 92% in 2019/20, 96% in 2018/19, 95% in 2017/18, 94% in 2016/17 and 96% in 2015/16*

Quality Assurance continue to work with those external examiners with outstanding reports and these will be circulated to schools upon receipt. Any issues identified will be highlighted and included as an update in the postgraduate report due for completion in May 2022.

1.2. Examination Board attendance: (based on responses on report forms)

Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	34 out of 36 examiners attended
Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences	21 out of 24 examiners attended
Faculty of Natural Sciences	29 out of 29 examiners attended
TOTAL	84 out of 90 examiners (93%)*

**this compares with 90% in 2019/21, 89% in 2018/19, 93% in 2017/18, 88% in 2016/17 and 91% in 2015/16*

As with 2019/20, the examination boards were all held online and as ever, some external examiners were unable to attend due to clashes with their own institutions.

1.3. External examiner profile:

During the 2020/21 academic year, 27 new external examiners were recruited and invited to complete an online induction swag. The majority of the external examiners complete their term of office as outlined in their letter of appointment, this academic year saw the need to terminate an examiner due to failing to carry out their duties, two external examiners moved roles and have been unable to continue and one external examiner resigned citing IT issues. As a result, 4% of the undergraduate external examiners will not complete their term of office.