

18/09/2014

The Vice-Chancellor
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EXTERNAL EXAMINERS REPORT: MSc Integrated immunology 2013_2014

The MSc Integrated Immunology course has continued to evolve over the last year incorporating a new Chair of examiners and introduction of new assessors. I will comment on each of the examination phases over the 3 terms.

Michaelmas Term

I attended the MT examiners meeting on the 20th of December to review the essay and computer based examinations. The standard of critical essay writing was good with one essay considered borderline distinction for viva voce assessment. Six candidates achieved distinction and there were no failures. The Computer based exams again returned high marks, but these were comparable to previous years. The MCQ styles would be reviewed before the next computer examination to limit T/F options.

Following the addition of mentors to the programmes, to comply with a University directive to provide written feedback in the first term, it was agreed that a proforma would be needed for future years to better guide mentors and standardise returns.

Hilary Term

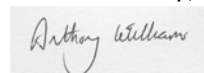
I attended the HT examiners meeting on the 28th of March to review the Clinical Case Commentaries and undertake the viva examinations. The main observations were that the computer based examination required further review as the exam did not appear to sufficiently distinguish between candidates. The clinical case commentaries were reformatted this year, with each student required to answer a question on immunodeficiency and allergy/hypersensitivity, with the choice of a further question from the remainder of the course content (Infectious Disease, Cancer, Transplantation and Immunomodulation). This change might have restricted the breadth of knowledge that could be demonstrated in the commentaries and would be reviewed prior to next year's exams. The discussion of future examiners was undertaken as both the Chair and External would be stepping down this year.

Trinity Term

I attended a Computer exam based 'root and branch' session with the Course Director on the 13th of May and the TT examiners meeting on the 1st of September to review the submitted dissertations. The computer based exam session identified deficiencies in the current system that led to random guess work leading to a mark of 25-49%, depending on the questions type. A systematic review of this identified the structural reasons for this within the question type (not just T/F questions) and plans to consider negative marking for future years were discussed. The submitted dissertations were of a consistently high standard in this year's cohort and the viva presentations were matched to the level of the written work.

As I finish my third year as External examiner I am assured that the course is rich in scholarship and credible in its academic rigour. I hope that the course continues to prosper, as future learning opportunities through open resource technologies and e learning platforms continue to evolve alongside traditional course structures. I have agreed to extend a further year as External Examiner to ensure a smooth changeover between both the External and Chair of examiners transition

Yours sincerely,



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Please reply to:

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