



Arab Open University

Summary of External Examiners Reports

Academic Year: 2022/2023

Semester: Summer

Programme: Information Technology and Computing

Tracks: ITC, CS, WD, NS, CwB, CyS, AI, DS

Number of Modules Examined by the External Examiners: 19

1. Chief External Examiners response and Comments:

Please confirm that the assessment and standards set for the programme are consistent and appropriate, and that the processes for assessment and determination of awards are fair, reliable across the provision.

The external examiners committee expressed their satisfaction of the assessments, as well as the consistence and appropriateness of the assessment processes.

Please confirm that sufficient information and evidence of professional work and students' assessment were -received by the programmes' external examiners to enable them to t fulfill their role.

All necessary evidences have been provided to the external examiners committee including samples of the students' work (i.e. TMA, MTA, and Final) from all branches categorized in three classes: poor, average, and good, as well as the GCCs reports, ratifications sheets, contingency report, and Cross Branch Marking report.

Commendations:

The quality of the provided work is remarkable.

Suggestions for Enhancement

2. Extracts from External Examiners report form

External Examiner Name: Prof. Ana Vukovic

Examined Modules: M269, TM351, TT284.

Please comment as appropriate on the following:

a. The academic standards for the programme/module.

The standards set are appropriate for the award and continue to improve

b. Performance of students in comparison to similar programmes

There were no issues with the student performance, which suggest that there were no issues with teaching and learning provision.

c. The quality of students' work, their knowledge and skills and achievement of learning outcomes

The quality of students' work was comparable to students elsewhere.

d. The strengths and weaknesses of the students

Majority of students have performed well.

e. The Quality of Assessments (design, methods and marking schemes)

- All issues that I have raised in the design and structure of assessments in the modules have been addressed.
- There was a clear link between the learning outcomes and assessments
- The administration of assessments was efficient and professional. Briefing of external examiners was effective and access to all material was provided in timely manner. I am particularly impressed by GCC reports and the Deanship report.

f. Standards of Marking and grading students' assessments

Marking of the exam was clear and grade criteria was consistently applied. The CBM activity that is conducted before marking is a useful practice and it resulted in more consistent marking across all branches. I would encourage this activity in the future.

External Examiner Name: Dr. Salem Al Jareh

Examined Modules: TM254, M251/M257, T227, TM298, TM356, T316.

Please comment as appropriate on the following:

a. The academic standards for the programme/module.

The standards set are appropriate for the award and continue to improve.

b. Performance of students in comparison to similar programmes

Judged by the students' performance and from students' feedback at the meeting with them, the teaching and learning seems to be of a good standard. However, the students feel they need more practical elements. Different ideas were discussed with the GCCs and hope will be adopted some in future.

c. The quality of students' work, their knowledge and skills and achievement of learning outcomes

Students are confident with demonstrating the gained knowledge but they seem to struggle with report writing, noticeable weakness with aspects such as justifying, suggestions and recommendation. Also, students need to be educated about the important of the accuracy of the presented facts and the important of backing them with evidences (e.g. citing the sources of the information)

d. The strengths and weaknesses of the students

Students are confident with demonstrating the gained knowledge but they seem to struggle with report writing, noticeable weakness with aspects such as justifying, suggestions and recommendation. Also, students need to be educated about the important of the accuracy of the presented facts and the important of backing them with evidences (e.g. citing the sources of the information)

Such skill is part of the transferable skill of many modules. The Deanship even requested the tutor to encourage the students to engage in the open course: "Essay and Report Writing Skills" offered by the OU. Nevertheless, the Deanship will keep doing all possible effort to enhance such important skills.

e. The Quality of Assessments (design, methods and making schemes)

The assessments seem to be well structured in general (unified format).

f. Standards of Marking and grading students' assessments

Assessors need to pay attention to the accuracy of the presented information (e.g. multiple cases when a full mark is given to figures with no unit, justification or reference).

Improvement is required in terms of mark verification. It continues to be an issue.

The provided feedback continues to be an issue, inconsistent. In some branches the feedback is direct and meaningful, while in other branches is quite poor (no feedback or general meaningless comment used for all sections). The Bahrain branch seems to have some form of mark verification. A good practice that can be shared with other branches.

External Examiner Name: Prof. Matt Jones

Examined Modules: TM354, TM355, TM352, TM240, TM471/T471.

Please comment as appropriate on the following:

a. The academic standards for the programme/module.

Yes. The standard is commensurate with the level and matches subject benchmarking and syllabus requirements I am familiar with.

b. Performance of students in comparison to similar programmes

Overall, the samples I assessed demonstrated the range of abilities one would expect across a cohort.

c. The quality of students' work, their knowledge and skills and achievement of learning outcomes

Overall, the samples I assessed demonstrated the range of abilities one would expect across a cohort.

d. The strengths and weaknesses of the students

As before, there is higher performance in the quantitative elements than in the qualitative aspects. As with students in the UK doing these sorts of course, I think the more training students are given in discursive, analytical thinking writing, the better. For a highly successful career, the ability to present and communicate beyond the purely technical is critical.

e. The Quality of Assessments (design, methods and marking schemes)

The mix of coursework, mid-term test and final assessment is sound, motivating learning and testing individual capability. Some assessments could benefit from more variety in example problems to ensure students don't revise to expected final assessments.

f. Standards of Marking and grading students' assessments

I received a comprehensive set of material to consider, including assessments, model answers/ marking schemes and samples showing how for example cross-branch marking was coordinated.

Continued development of and transparency in cross-branch marking is to be encouraged