



External Examiner's Report - Academic Year 2008-09

The following is taken from the report from our external examiner for AY 2008-09. It is the public portion of the report, which we share with past, current and prospective students.

PART C

This part of the form will be shared with students, usually through departmental Staff:Student Liaison Committees. You are asked to provide a brief summary of your comments from Parts A and B that might be of particular interest to students. We would also ask that you restrict your comments to those that would be of primary interest to students, rather than, for example, technical points on assessment schemes. What you have written will not be changed, though it may be accompanied by a statement of the actions the Department or School has taken in response to your comments.

Please use the space below to provide commentary on any or all of the following topics:

- Strengths/weaknesses of the programme/course
- Methods of teaching (judging by standards achieved by students)
- Methods of assessment
- Standard of the student performance

This is a well taught programme. It is quite clear from reading the essays and the exam answers that students are well prepared, they have access to a wide ranging and appropriate literature and are up to date on issues. The courses taken complement each other well. From the evidence I saw students are able to relate theoretical and conceptual literature to their experiences of urban planning. The assessment seemed appropriate although students do need to be careful not to use similar material in different courses or on the essay and examinations in the same course – this was not a serious problem but was one that needed to be monitored closely on an ongoing basis. The programme is well run and well supported by the administrative officer.

Students might be encouraged to be more adventurous and creative in their writing particularly in their dissertations – they tended to stick to the script which reflected well on their reading and teaching but meant they found it difficult to excel; they should aim to bring more 'of themselves' to their assessed work.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND TROUBLE IN COMPLETING THIS FORM.