

EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT FORM 2018



External examiner name:	Alexander Bird	
External examiner home institution:	King's College London	
Course examined:	Mathematics and Philosophy	
Level: (please delete as appropriate)	Undergraduate	

Please complete both Parts A and B.

Part A					
		<i>Please (✓) as applicable*</i>	Yes	No	N/A / Other
A1.	Are the academic standards and the achievements of students comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which you have experience?		✓		
A2.	Do the threshold standards for the programme appropriately reflect the frameworks for higher education qualifications and any applicable subject benchmark statement? <i>[Please refer to paragraph 6 of the Guidelines for External Examiner Reports].</i>		✓		
A3.	Does the assessment process measure student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme(s)?		✓		
A4.	Is the assessment process conducted in line with the University's policies and regulations?		✓		
A5.	Did you receive sufficient information and evidence in a timely manner to be able to carry out the role of External Examiner effectively?		✓		
A6.	Did you receive a written response to your previous report?				n/a
A7.	Are you satisfied that comments in your previous report have been properly considered, and where applicable, acted upon?				n/a
<p>* If you answer "No" to any question, please provide further comments in Part B. Further comments may also be given in Part B, if desired, if you answer "Yes" or "N/A / Other".</p>					

Part B

B1. Academic standards

- a. *How do academic standards achieved by the students compare with those achieved by students at other higher education institutions of which you have experience?*

The standards are fully comparable to those at other HEIs of which I have experience (King's, Bristol, Edinburgh, Nottingham).

- b. *Please comment on student performance and achievement across the relevant programmes or parts of programmes (those examining in joint schools are particularly asked to comment on their subject in relation to the whole award).*

The student performance was very good indeed. In year 3 there were almost 50% firsts, and over 70% at year 4, with all remaining candidates achieving a 2.i. Comparing the marks on particular (philosophy) papers with marks by other candidates shows that these were high achieving students, not that the standards were easy to achieve.

B2. Rigour and conduct of the assessment process

Please comment on the rigour and conduct of the assessment process, including whether it ensures equity of treatment for students, and whether it has been conducted fairly and within the University's regulations and guidance.

The examination process was conducted with a high degree of rigour and care. A prima facie concern had been raised about one particular philosophy paper and the active response to this concern exemplified this rigour.

Even though the number of students taking these exams was small and so in principle it might have been possible to identify a student from her/his choice of papers and other information, the examiners were careful to avoid this. Due consideration was given to individual circumstances in line with the regulations. As far as I could tell, the regulations were adhered to carefully.

B3. Issues

Are there any issues which you feel should be brought to the attention of supervising committees in the faculty/department, division or wider University?

None (see under 'Any other comments' for one small point).

B4. Good practice and enhancement opportunities

*Please comment/provide recommendations on any **good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment**, and any **opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities** provided to students that should be noted and disseminated more widely as appropriate.*

As mentioned above, the examination process was conducted with a high degree of rigour and care, from well-thought out exam papers through to the conduct of the examiners' meeting. I did not see anything that particularly stood out as innovative good practice. But I don't regard that as any kind of failing. The process seemed well-suited to its purpose and was conducted effectively.

B5. Any other comments

Please provide any other comments you may have about any aspect of the examination process. Please also use this space to address any issues specifically required by any applicable professional body. If your term of office is now concluded, please provide an overview here.

A small point about the examiners' meeting: the mark sheets indicated the various papers with a code name/number which made it difficult or impossible to know which papers those were. It would be helpful to provide a key to link the codes to the full names of the papers.

Signed:	<i>Alexander Bird</i>
Date:	31 July 2018

Please email your completed form to: external-examiners@admin.ox.ac.uk and copy it to the applicable divisional contact set out in the guidelines.