



# External Examiner Report

<b>Name of External Examiner:</b>	<b>K.P.L.G. (Carool) Kersten</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Reader in the Study of Islam and the Muslim World</b>
<b>Institution:</b>	<b>King's College London</b>
<b>Programme Being Reviewed:</b>	<b>AKU-ISMC Master of Arts in Muslim Cultures 2017 – 2018</b>

## IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE:

- Once completed, please send your form to the AKU-ISMC Registrar's Office within seven days of the **final** Exam Board meeting.
- If there is insufficient space for your comments in any section, please continue on a separate sheet, labelling it appropriately.
- External Examiner Reports will be copied and sent to the relevant Programme Heads, Committees and Boards concerned. Brief excerpts may be included in reports published by the Institute.

		Please mark X where appropriate	YES	NO	N/A
<b>Section I : General</b>					
<b>1</b>	Did you receive copies of relevant documents (e.g. syllabus, marking schemes, etc.)?	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b>	Did you see a sufficient number of scripts and other assessed work, including those of distinction, borderline and failed candidates, to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	Were you invited to attend meetings of the Board of Examiners?	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4</b>	Was the meeting conducted to your satisfaction? If not, please comment below in section 32.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5</b>	Was the general standard of marking and assessment satisfactory?	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6</b>	Were there satisfactory marking schemes for the overall degree, individual papers and individual questions (where applicable)?	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7</b>	Were all scripts/essays double-marked internally?	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section II: Quality of Teaching and Learning**

Questions 8 to 11 have been designed to meet the higher education qualification framework requirements for collecting and publishing views of External Examiner(s). Your answers to these questions will be made publicly accessible although your name will not be published.

		Please mark X where appropriate	YES	NO
<b>8</b>	Were the standards set for the awards appropriate for a Master's level qualification in this subject? If no, please give reasons below.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>9</b>	Were the standards of student performance comparable to similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which you are familiar? If no, please give reasons below.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>10</b>	Were the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards sound and fairly conducted? If no, please give reasons below.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>11</b>	Please give a brief description of any particular strengths or distinctive or innovative features in relation to standards and assessment processes that would be worth drawing to the attention of external audiences.			
	Please refer to the attachment.			

<b>Section III: Assessment</b>				
<b>Please mark X where appropriate</b>			<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>12</b>	Were the forms of assessment used appropriate for assessing the learning outcomes specified? If no, please give reasons below.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>13</b>	Do forms of assessment include both formative and summative assessment? If no, please give reasons below.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>14</b>	Was the information provided to students and External Examiners about assessment explicit and accessible? If no, please give reasons below.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>15</b>	Was the amount of assessed work manageable for students and staff? If no, please give reasons below.	<b>x</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

16	Was feedback to students on assessment appropriate and timely? If no, please give reasons below.	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments on degree programme examined</b>			
17	Please comment on matters such as: the balance, content and coherence of the degree/diploma programme and the appropriateness of any compulsory courses; fulfilment of stated course objectives; suitability of methods and adequacy of teaching as reflected by the standards achieved by candidates; particular strengths and weaknesses of the Programme Please also identify any significant issues which you feel need to be addressed.		
	Please refer to the attachment		
<b>Comments on the examination and assessment process</b>			
18	Please comment on matters such as: appropriateness and range of the examination methods, i.e. unseen written papers, essays/dissertations, orals, etc. the marking scheme and the scheme for award of honours or a mark of merit or distinction (as appropriate); quality of candidates (including their knowledge of English); quality of assessment; particular strengths and weaknesses. Please also identify any significant issues which you feel need to be addressed.		
	Please refer to the attachment.		

<b>Section IV: Institutional Aspects</b>	
<b>19</b>	<i>Please list any serious institutional issues and/or concerns that you would wish to bring to the attention of senior management of the University. It is envisaged that this section will only be completed in exceptional circumstances.</i>
	N.A.
<b>20</b>	<b>Section V: Response to Previous Report</b> <i>Please confirm if you received an appropriate response to issues or actions raised in your previous report(s).</i>
	Yes, the points raised in the report were acknowledged and addressed.
<b>21</b>	<b>Section VI: Any Other Comments</b>
	N.A.

Signed  .....

Date **16 October 2018** .....

Completed forms should be returned to the AKU-ISMC Registrar's Office within 7 days of the Exam Board Meeting and can be sent via email to **ismc.registraroffice@aku.edu** or by post to:

Registrar's Office  
**The Aga Khan University**  
**Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations**  
**Aga Khan Centre**  
**10 Handyside Street**  
**London, N1C 4DN**

We would also invite you to provide feedback and make recommendations to us on the design and ease of use of this form.

### Programme, modules & Assessments

- Repeat from previous years: A broad range of very interesting modules are on offer, combining humanities and social sciences approaches. Congratulations for having a module on Sub-Saharan Africa and also covering African literature in another.
- Assessment methods include essays (of different lengths), presentations, debate participation, writing annotated bibliographies for self-selected case studies, book reviews, reflections on primary and secondary sources, multiple choice exam.
- Variance in weighing/word length. 'Religion, Law & Society' (30/70% - 1500/2000 words respectively); 'Gender, Nation & Muslim Identity' (40/60% - approx. 1500/3000); 'Religion & Politics & State in SA & ME' (30/70% - max 1500-3000 words), 'Muslim Minorities' (30/70% - multiple choice & 2500 word essay respectively); Path of Sufism (60% equals 2500 word essay); literature module (35/65% - 1500-3000 words); Sacred Across Cultures (40% = 3000 words); 'Late Antiquity' (2000 word midterm, 2500-3000 word final – but without weighing)

### Coursework Assessment

- Grade sheets provided for terms 5,6,7 of the Class of 2018, and for terms 1,2,3 for the class of 2019. Four modules for each term.
- For each module, three submissions were highlighted for examiner perusal, consisting of highest, an intermediate, and the lowest mark.
- In most instances, the narrative feedback is detailed and extensive, and both critical and constructive. Some assessors breaking it down into different result areas (structure, argument, originality, etc.). Together with the in-text comments they give evidence of careful and conscientious assessment.
- 'Research Methodology II' and 'Writing in humanities': feedback is really very detailed.
- Some feedback is done via the box on Turnitin, in other instances a file is uploaded for subsequent download.
- Query. Marksheet of 'History of a Nation' has an assessment breakdown of mid-term 40%, presentation 10%, final assessment 60%. Outline states 40% midterm (30 % /10%) and 60% for final – also borne out by the calculation on the marksheet. Marksheet to be corrected.
- Query: 'Religion, Law & Society': Midterm 30% (1500 words), Final 70% (2000 words). This seems a mismatch with the weighing, both mid vs final, but also in comparison to the word-length in other modules (for example: 'History of a Nation' has a final essay counting for 60% has a word-length of 3000). Also I could find no written feedback for the final assessment, either in the online feedback box of Turnitin or as an uploaded file.
- 'Contemporary Arts & Cultures' oral presentations: Student B grade sheet: 79. On Turnitin: 65

- 'Traditions & Change in Sub-Saharan Africa': Brief narrative feedback, no evidence of more detailed in-text comments.
- According to the outline of 'Muslim Minorities in Context' the midterm consists in a multiple choice exam, but the submitted work consists of essays....
- Query: What went wrong with 'Sacred Across Cultures' in terms of communicating assessment requirements

### **Dissertations**

- Also this year an interesting range of topics is addressed in the dissertations
- Feedback provided is extensive and to the point
- What is the reason for the comment on the marksheet concerning the dissertation of Student X?  
This seems a solid B, can the wider range between 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> marks than in other instances be attributed to a humanities approach vs numerically-informed social sciences approach?
- Same query for Student Y, although this is indisputably not a dissertation on MA Level.