

EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report via the Cardiff University Intranet [here](#) and from ExternalExaminers@cardiff.ac.uk.

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Thierry Chausalet		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Westminster		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report including any dissertation stage reports	MSc in Operational Research and Applied Statistics / MSc Operational Research, Applied Statistics and Risk		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	201-16	Date of Report:	16 Nov 2017

Please complete all information in the spaces provided and submit within **six weeks** of the Examining Board (the **taught stage** Examining Board in the case of **postgraduate Master's programmes**).

Please note this form will be published online and should not make any reference to any individual students or members of staff in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

Please extend spaces where necessary.

1. Programme Structure (curriculum design, programme structure and level, methods of teaching and learning)

Students on both programmes take the two 30 credit core modules covering OR and Statistics and various 10 credit modules, some core, some optional. The project is then normally completed over the summer. This structure and content are highly appropriate to achieve the aims, and learning outcomes of the programme.

The course provides overall a balanced coverage of theory and practice, with typically core modules providing theory and concepts, and options focusing on interesting application areas such as healthcare modelling. Again I have to mention that the hackathon is an exciting feature of the communication module, which I am thinking of introducing in some of our courses.

2. Academic Standards (comparability with other UK HEIs, achievement of students, any PSRB requirements)

Standards are very good, and at least as good as or better than all other institutions I am familiar with.

3. The Assessment Process (enabling achievement of aims and learning outcomes; stretch of assessment; comparability of standards between modules of the same level)

Assessments are well designed to achieve the modules learning outcome, with a mixture of coursework and exams. Marking is fair. I have been provided all the necessary material to review exam papers prior to exams, and a good sample of exams and coursework at the end.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

[Previous External Examiner Reports are available from the Cardiff University Website [here](#).]

These continue to be very good courses recruiting high calibre students.

5. Preparation for the role of External Examiner (for new External Examiners only) (appropriateness of briefing provided, visits to School, programme handbooks and supporting information)

N/A

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement (good and innovative practice in learning, teaching and assessment; opportunities for enhancement of learning opportunities)

Group work, hackathon.

7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only) (significant changes in standards, programme/discipline developments, implementation of recommendations, further areas of work)

N/A

8. Annual Report Checklist

Please include appropriate comments within Sections 1-7 above for any answer of 'No'.

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
Programme/Course Information				
8.1	Did you receive sufficient information about the Programme and its contents, learning outcomes and assessments?	Y		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?			N/A
Draft Examination Question Papers				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	Y		
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
Marking Examination Scripts				
8.6	Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	Y		

8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	Y		
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	Y		
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	Y		
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	Y		
Coursework and Practical Assessments				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	Y		
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	Y		
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	Y		
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	Y		
Clinical Examinations (if applicable)				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			N/A
Sampling of Work				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
Examining Board Meeting				
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	Y		
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	Y		
8.19	Cardiff University recognises the productive contribution of External Examiners to the assessment process and, in particular, to the work of the Examining Board. Have you had adequate opportunities to discuss the Programme and any outstanding concerns with the Examining Board or its officers?	Y		
Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)				
8.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?		N	
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			N/A
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			N/A
Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)				
8.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	Y		
8.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?	Y		
8.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?	Y		

8.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?	Y		
8.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?	Y		
8.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?	Y		
8.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?	Y		
8.30	<p>Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations. <i>Please provide any comments you may wish to make on the issues raised above.</i></p> <p>As in previous years, all dissertations were given marks in the appropriate band: 50≤Pass<60, 60≤Merit<70, 70≤Distinction. Some of the dissertations seen were outstanding.</p> <p>One dissertation was given a mark of 95/100. While this was an excellent piece of work (more theoretical than applied) definitely well above the Distinction threshold, I would have thought that any mark above 90 would mean the work has been or will be submitted for publication in a relevant respectable journal (or conference) – this was not the case here. While a mark of say 85 would have not made any difference to the student's overall results and ranking here, I would recommend to look into criteria for awarding exceptionally high mark to projects.</p> <p>Again as last year, there were some examples of very good constructive and useful comments by some examiners, however there were again some rather vague and generic comments by others, both for low and high quality pieces of work. I would recommend that more justification be given especially for very weak and very outstanding work. It also provides better feedback to students.</p> <p>This year for almost all projects I saw, both 1st and 2nd examiners gave very similar marks, therefore I would not necessarily expect to see much justification for the final agreed mark. However there was dissertation which was given marks of 65 and 75 by the two examiners individually and a final mark of 70, with no a clear justification for the final mark – even if the midpoint was chosen, there must be a reason.</p>			

Please return this Report, **in a Microsoft Word format**, by email to:

externalexaminers@cardiff.ac.uk

Your fee and expenses claim form and receipts, should be sent electronically to the above email address or in hard copy to:

External Examiners, Registry, Cardiff University, McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE