

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

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|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | For completion by External Examiner: | | |
| Name of External Examiner: | Dr Sarah Maitland | | |
| Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner: | Goldsmiths, University of London | | |
| Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report | BA in Translation Studies | | |
| Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report: | 2018-2019 | Date of Report: | 21 October 2019 |

Please complete all information in the spaces provided and submit within **six weeks** of the Examining Board (the dissertation 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 General Data Protection Regulation (2018).

Please extend spaces where necessary.

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

I examined modules making up the BA in Translation Studies. As with last year, the level of detail provided in the module documentation is exemplary and the aims and objectives of modules are evident in the quality of student work I examined. I congratulate all tutors, convenors, and head of year/programme, for their very evident commitment and impressive results.

The diverse range of methods of teaching and learning continues to be commendable, enabling students to benefit from a broad range of approaches to translation, and the content across the programme is varied, enabling students to develop skills in a wide range of relevant areas of professional practice.

I note a prevalence of team teaching, which is to be applauded. This gives students the opportunity to experience a variety of approaches and ensures sustainability of delivery. I do recommend that this team-teaching schema is supported to continue.

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

As with last year, the modules compare very well with those of other programmes of a similar nature of which I am aware, in terms of the assessment regime, standards and approach to marking, feedback, the length, make-up and quality of assessment, and the structure and content. There is clear evidence of outstanding work on the part of students and the range of marking applied is in good evidence.

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

The content of modules continues to prepare and develop students towards assessment, and the standards of marking across the programme are of a high level.

The achievement of module aims and learning outcomes is in clear evidence in the students' work I examined and is reflective of solid work on the part of tutors to support students and encourage development of skills and abilities over the course of the academic year. There is a good balance of content and foci in the assessment regime.

I noted some differences in approach to feedback across the various modules and, moving forward, recommend a coordinated and singular approach both to moderation and the provision of feedback on assessment. Feedback on some modules was fulsome and developmentally orientated, while on others there was a less clear rationale for the selection of a particular mark and what areas for improvement arose from the work submitted. I recommend ensuring that all modules offer the same level and depth of feedback for students, rather than having some modules offer more, or less, than others. I noted that on one occasion a moderator recommended the use of feedback that focuses on strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement as a model for good practice. I support such a developmentally orientated approach to student feedback and recommend making clear markers' rationale for the choice of mark and feedback given; giving an explanation of the reasons why a higher mark could not be achieved; and providing markers' recommendations on areas for improvement and continuous development. On occasion, very high scoring work was not given the same level and depth of feedback as others. Where students score in the first category, I recommend that markers make clear why the work scored the particular mark that it did, and what prevented it from scoring more highly. There is an opportunity here from a staff development perspective to work with the team of markers and moderators to implement an agreed approach.

With regard to the final year dissertation component, I noted the potential for quite a similar approach to the MA Translation Studies dissertation. Given the importance of ensuring sustainable pathways from BA to MA study in the School, I recommend that there is an opportunity here for reflexion on differentiating assessment content, approach and structure in the BA Translation Studies from provision on the MA Translation Studies, ensuring that students continuing from BA to MA are supported with material and structures that both build on and differ from their studies at undergraduate level.

4. **Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)** (sample of dissertations received, appropriateness of marking schemes, standard of internal marking, classification of awards)

[Where possible please complete this section following the dissertation examining board determining the final award.]

N/A

5. Year-on-Year Comments

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

Last year, I recommended that:

1. Borderlines be avoided
2. Feedback be more detailed and provided in a pro forma
3. The approach to feedback be agreed across modules, as to the length, content and consistency and that feedback should be of the same length across modules
4. Feedback include areas for development
5. Feedback addresses a student, rather than an academic audience
6. Sufficient time for scrutiny of material in advance of the Board
7. A moderation model be implemented, rather than second marking

Recommendations:

This year, as I note in point 3 of this form, there are many good examples of detailed, developmentally orientated feedback, and no borderline issues. There are also many thoughtful approaches to moderation. The timing and structure of the Boards and process of scrutinising the material this year were exemplary. A very appropriate amount of time was allocated for the scrutiny of material ahead of the Board and the scheduling of the Boards was ideal.

With regard to my specific recommendations this year, I propose that it would be ideal if exam scripts could be presented in the Board pack in numerical order by mark achieved, so as to facilitate scrutiny ahead of the Board. On the day of the Boards, I recommend that material presented on screen to Board members is anonymised. As I note in point 3, I recommend that all modules offer the same level and depth of feedback for students and that feedback provides a rationale for the mark given, an explanation of why the mark could not score higher and what aspects of development the student could put into place moving forward. I also continue to support a first marking and moderation model, in line with the sector, rather than a double marking model.

One area of concern that I wish to record formally for the attention of the institution relates to External Examiners' accommodation and transport to and from Examining Boards.

This year, I was required to purchase my own travel and accommodation and to claim this back from the institution through an expenses form.

This is a challenging model, as it places the financial burden on External Examiners, and requires them to make expenditure on behalf of the institution using their personal funds and personal bank accounts.

The cost of traveling to the Board and accommodation to Cardiff is later refunded, following a given period of time after presentation of receipts, but the model requires External Examiners to incur the expense on a personal level in the first instance. A related concern is the question of insurance with regard to External Examiners traveling to attend the Boards, and the extent to which External Examiners contracted by the institution but purchasing their own travel and accommodation through personal funds could affect this.

I strongly recommend that this practice be reviewed and look forward to receiving the institution's response on this specific aspect I have signalled.

6. Preparation for the role of External Examiner (for new External Examiners only) (appropriateness of briefing provided by the programme team and supporting information, visits to School, ability to meet with students, arrangements for accessing work to review)

As with last year, the organisation of material for examining during the Monday prior to the module and programme Boards was exemplary, with each set of module scripts supplied alongside a copy of the course kit and marks overview. This facilitated an efficient examining process and I am grateful to all colleagues who worked together to ensure a very smooth and fruitful process.

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

I noted a consistent, fair, and thorough approach to marking, and to embracing the full marking scale. Although I have noted some occasions where the feedback could be developed, overall, as with last year, the commitment to detailed and constructive assessment feedback is clear. The active approach to marking that tutors have taken is to be commended, and it is clear that they see it as an important developmental tool for students.

There is a very high level of engagement in evidence on the part of markers, with a clear desire to develop students' capabilities. Tutors across the programme are highly committed, and this is in clear evidence in students' writing.

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

9. 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 | | | | |
| 9.1 | Did you receive sufficient information about the Programme and its contents, learning outcomes and assessments? | Y | | |
| 9.2 | Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme? | Y | | |
| Commenting on draft examination question papers | | | | |
| 9.3 | Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award? | Y | | |
| 9.4 | Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate? | Y | | |
| 9.5 | Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments? | Y | | |
| Examination scripts | | | | |
| 9.6 | Did you receive a sufficient number of scripts to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent? | Y | | |
| 9.7 | Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate? | Y | | |
| 9.8 | Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks? | Y | | |
| 9.9 | Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners? | Y | | |
| 9.10 | 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 | | | | |
| 9.11 | Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate? | Y | | |
| 9.12 | Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments? | Y | | |
| 9.13 | Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate? | Y | | |
| 9.14 | Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work? | Y | | |
| Clinical examinations (if applicable) | | | | |
| 9.15 | Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments? | | | n/a |
| Sampling of work | | | | |
| 9.16 | Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work? | Y | | |
| Examining board meeting | | | | |
| 9.17 | Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting? | Y | | |

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|--|---|--|--|-----|
| 9.18 | Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction? | Y- largely ; please see point 5. | | |
| 9.19 | 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) | | | | |
| 9.20 | Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees? | | | n/a |
| 9.21 | If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees? | | | n/a |
| 9.22 | Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules? | | | n/a |

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

