



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Robin Sen		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Sheffield		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MA/PG Diploma in Social Work at Cardiff		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2016 – 2017	Date of Report:	21st July, 2017

For completion by External Examiner in the spaces provided. Please extend spaces where necessary. **Please note this Form will be published online.**

### 1. Programme Structure

Two year post-graduate qualifying social work degree programme, meeting requirements set by Care Council for Wales. Practice partners and ‘service users and carers’ are appropriately involved within the programme. The programme material reflects the distinctly Welsh practice and policy context and increasing divergence in the Welsh policy context. The subject content and the structure of the programme is broadly comparable to Masters qualifying programmes in other parts of the UK. The programme integrates a Masters qualification through completion of a research dissertation and is a generic programme offering education in both adult and children’s services practice, albeit students choose an area of preference in their second year, which is then linked to their third and final practice learning experience.

### 2. Academic Standards

The standards expected of students and achieved by them in their academic work continue to compare well with other post-graduate programmes with which I am familiar. The course has a strong and welcome emphasis on developing students as both critical thinkers as well as social work practitioners, the former being evident in the type and standard of dissertation work produced by students on the course. Standards of written work expected from students are rigorous. The strongest work is of a very good standard. There were a few more fails overall on a couple of the modules I examined this year and it was evident these fails were merited. The failure rate is not especially concerning and may just be variation between year groups but I

am aware the course team have rigorous internal review processes to consider whether there are any wider issues underpinning this.

Student feedback from the two students the External Examiners met was that they clearly felt the course had prepared them to start as qualified practitioners, which is the litmus test of a qualifying programme. A desire for more teaching that supported them to link theory to practice in the final period of the course was also voiced – something which is not an uncommon request from social work students on qualifying courses in my experience - but nonetheless something for the course team to consider moving into the academic year ahead.

### **3. The Assessment Process**

There is a good range of assessment tasks which are well thought through and link well to the particular learning outcomes in given modules. Of particular note is the consistent way in which thought has been given to trying to make links between academic assessment of student learning and practice learning through assessment tasks.

The input and importance of practice agencies and practice educators within the assessment of student learning is very evident and visible. ‘Service user and carer’ involvement is evident and was reflected by the attendance of a ‘service user and carer’ representatives at the Exam Board who spoke positively about their involvement in the course.

Academic feedback is detailed, helpful and clear. Feedback is also clear and helpful as to what students need to do to improve. I have also seen positive changes in the way markers’ feedback clearly summarises key areas of needed improvement for students on scripts during my time as an external.

### **4. Year-on-Year Comments**

Minor suggestions for improvement made last year have been taken on board and I find the course team very open to both undertaking their own analysis of ways of improving the course and taking on board feedback from both External Examiners in a constructive manner.

As ever I would like to note the helpful and efficient support of the course administrator [REDACTED]

This is also my fellow External Examiner’s final year in post and I would like to extend my appreciation to [REDACTED] as a colleague whom I have learned from in the role of External Examiner and wish her well for the future.

### **5. Preparation / Induction Activity (for new External Examiners only)**

Not applicable.

### **6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement**

- ❖ *The course has a strong external reputation and overall academic standards on the course remain in line with its reputation.*
- ❖ *The course team conduct their own internal reviews of the course and are open to External Examiners' suggestions for improvement.*
- ❖ *There remains a welcome focus on developing social work students as critical thinkers as well as social work practitioners.*
- ❖ *The administrative support for the course (and External Examiners within this) is excellent.*
- ❖ *Available 'service user and carer', practice agency and student feedback on the course is positive.*

## **7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)**

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)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
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	
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
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		
<b>Marking Examination Scripts</b>				
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		
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
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		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			N/A
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				

		<b>Yes (Y)</b>	<b>No (N)</b>	<b>N/A (N/A)</b>
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		
<b>Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)</b>				
8.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>N/A</b>
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>N/A</b>
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			<b>N/A</b>

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

[ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk](mailto:ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk)

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

Clive Brown, Registry Officer, Registry & Academic Services, Cardiff University,  
McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE