



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report and are available at <http://learning.cf.ac.uk/quality/review/external-examiners/reports/>.

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Duncan Wass		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Bristol		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report	MSc in Catalysis		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015/16	Date of Report:	29 October 2016

For completion by External Examiner in the spaces provided. Please extend spaces where necessary. **Please note this Form will be published online and should not make any reference to any individual students or members of staff.**

### 1. Programme Structure

This is a well-structured and balanced programme that has stood the test of time. The mix of taught material is comprehensive and delivered in an appropriate manner.

### 2. Academic Standards

Standards are high. The level of teaching and scholarship is exemplary, as is the pastoral support of students.

### 3. The Assessment Process

This is rigorous and fair.

### 4. Year-on-Year Comments

The minor actions raised in previous years have been acted upon. It is always tempting for external examiners to recommend changes but really a period of stability is more appropriate. This programme runs smoothly and little change is needed.

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

n/a

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

The catalyst design project remains an excellent opportunity for peer to peer learning and teamwork.

## **7. Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations (External Examiners for postgraduate Master's Programmes only, see also 9.23-9.29 below)**

Dissertations were of a good standard and were marked in a fair and transparent manner.

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

Throughout my tenure, this has been a well-run course with an excellent balance of material. The nature of this programme in terms of the students it attracts has changed over the time I have been examiner, in some years there have been a larger number of weaker students, and the course has evolved appropriately to give these more support. Overall numbers of students seems to be healthy, suggesting there is still a need for this course even in an environment with an increasing number of EPSRC CDTs that offer similar training in their first year.

The role of the external examiner has also changed (in line with my experience at other institutions) in that the University regulations now permit only very, very little discretion for the external examiners and examination board beyond scrutiny of the process; for example, mark adjustments are produced according to a pre-set algorithm. With this approach, I wonder (more philosophically!) whether the traditional external examiner role (and indeed the examination board) is still fit for purpose, or at least the most efficient and cost effective way to ensure confidence in results. It seems a throwback to a previous era where many students were vivaed and there was much more discretion on the part of examiners to recommend changes to classification, for example. I suggest a more streamlined process could be considered.

## 9. Annual Report Checklist

Please include appropriate comments within Sections 1-8 above for any answer of 'No'.

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
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		
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
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		
<b>Marking Examination Scripts</b>				
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		
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
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		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			n/a
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	y		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
9.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	y		
9.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	y		
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		
<b>Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)</b>				
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
<b>Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)</b>				
9.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	y		
9.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?	y		
9.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?	y		
9.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?	y		
9.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?	y		
9.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?	y		
9.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?	y		

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:

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

#### **SAMPLING OF TAUGHT MASTER'S DISSERTATIONS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

External Examiners shall be expected to see prescribed numbers and ranges of Dissertations, but not to mark them, on the following basis:

At least 10% of Dissertations for a postgraduate taught Master's Programme, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure) must be seen by the External Examiner(s). Where the total number is less than 10, all Dissertations must be seen by the External Examiner(s) #.

Dissertations seen by External Examiners should include examples from across the whole range of achievement (i.e. Pass with Distinction, Pass, Fail).

External Examiners will retain the right to see other Dissertations at random.

# Where more than one External Examiner is appointed on a Programme, at least 10% of Dissertations, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure), should be seen collectively by the External Examiners.