



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Professor Kevin Stenson		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Kent		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2012-13	Date of Report:	18/03/2014

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

The course programme is coherent and its delivery meets well the programme specifications, learning outcomes aims it sets for itself.

2. Academic Standards

The course meets the criteria of the national QAA benchmarks for criminology and compares very well with other criminology masters course that I have taught on and externally examined. The staff team are very experienced, have published widely and have made significant contributions to criminology that have been recognised internationally. The commitment to the enhancement of the discipline is also evident in the editorship by the team of the British Society of Criminology’s journal during the period of my external examinership. This kind of professional commitment is vital for teachers on masters programmes. The fruit of their research and publications has been integrated most effectively into the modules which has provided a rich and stimulating learning environment for the students. This, for example is manifested in introducing students to cutting edge debates in criminological theory and the changing nature of the organisation of crime, pluralistic forms of policing, to innovative methodological debates, particularly the issue of ‘what works’ in policing and criminal justice. In addition, while students displayed familiarity with international research, they also showed awareness of the need to tailor institutions and practice to local needs and the need to develop the particular character of Welsh criminal justice, essential in the evolution of Wales as a distinct jurisdiction and society. I have been impressed by the sophisticated understanding of these issues shown in students’ work over several cohorts. The involvement of the staff team in collaborative research on community safety, urban security and the politics of crime control at the European level has been manifest in teaching programmes and students’ assessed work in a range of modules. The

methodology modules have produced particularly impressive discussions of key issues in both quantitative and qualitative work.

3. The Assessment Process

The assessment process was handled in an impressively professional manner. I was kept well informed at every stage by the administrators, provided with clear instructions and guidance and given adequate time to judge assessed work. I was consulted about essay and exam questions and the development of the programme. The exam boards were conducted conscientiously and fairly. The range of formative and final assessments was appropriate, with a healthy balance between examinations and course work. Given the prevalence of plagiarism, this is commendable. Overall the standards of grading between the modules was very consistent and the assessment standards and the quality of the students' work compares very well with that of other masters' programmes with which I am familiar in the UK. The choice of topics for dissertations was broad and very interesting, ranging from, for example, Columbian drug trafficking to the EU policy on the trafficking of human beings. While the quality of students' work varied, as one would expect on masters' programmes, in each cohort there were examples of exemplary, creative and innovative work. The feedback to students on dissertations and other assessed work was extremely thorough, caring and helpful – altogether commendable.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

The course team took on board suggested improvements in the programme. For example there was a tendency, at one stage, for methodological assessments to veer too much towards theory. This was corrected by redressing the balance more towards a requisite focus on the practical issues of research.

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

N/A

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

The teaching of both criminological theory and research methods was particularly impressive on this programme and yielded some excellent work from the students, who, where they had professional experience of criminal justice, had adequate opportunities to reflect on and use it in their studies.

7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

Most of the points I wish to make have already been made above. Though I understand major changes have been made to the masters programme the university is blessed with a particularly conscientious and talented team of criminologists who have served the students well and hopefully they will continue this work on newer programmes. I have very much enjoyed my association with the criminology team at the university.

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?	Y		
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?			
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?			N/A
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		

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
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/A
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			

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

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