



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:	Professor Chris LANGLEY		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Aston University		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	Pharmacy (MPharm) <i>MPharm (Clinical Pharmacy)</i>		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2016-2017	Date of Report:	18 th June 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)

Building on developments from last year, the Cardiff MPharm programme continues its restructure to produce a more integrated programme as required by the accrediting body for Pharmacy, the General Pharmaceutical Council.

During my visit I learnt about the University's proposals to introduce a system which caps the module mark if there are any component referrals within the module. While this may be beneficial in some programmes, nationally MPharm programmes are moving towards larger integrated modules to ensure that the programme material is not taught and/or assessed in small sub-discipline silos. The restructured MPharm programme at Cardiff is making similar changes and so this capping proposal would mean that for programme such as the MPharm, the effect of capping the module based on a component referral would be much greater and potentially much more punitive on the students' mark profile than for students on other programmes. If the University does take steps down this route for programmes in general, I would recommend that some adaptation or exemption is put in place for the MPharm programme.

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

As highlighted in my report from my visit last academic year, it was evident that the programme is maintaining the threshold academic standards in accordance with the QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies. In addition, the academic standards and the achievements of students are comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which I am familiar. As last year, I was able to look at all the relevant examination papers in advance of the examinations taking place and it was evident that in the most part, changes had been made based on my suggestions.

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

I undertook specific reviews of assessment material from the following modules.

- **PH4118** - I looked at a range of scripts and in all cases it was clear where marks were given and importantly, in many cases why marks were not given. However, it would help to include the marks from the subsections which and marked from answers given on the question paper in the mark breakdown on the front of the relevant answer paper. The marking of the OSCEs seems clear and fair. I reviewed all the fail OSCE mark sheets and in each case, I could see why the student had failed.
- **PH3110** - It would be useful to have a break-down of the results from the MCQs as without this, it not possible to verify the component marks from just the SAQs. The supply of the Item Analysis Report was useful in providing a contextual overview of the response ranges; however, I do wonder if the module team are using the report as from only a quick review, it was evident that Question 19 of the MCQs has the incorrect answer so needed remarking. At the student meeting, it was highlighted by the students present that there was a lot to answer within the timeframe; I would encourage the module team to take this student comment into consideration.
- **PH2110** - There was evidence that the comments I had provided in relation to the examination paper and the mark scheme had been taken into consideration in advance of producing the final paper. I like the format of the paper at this level with the mix of MCQs and SAQs. As with other examination papers I looked at, it was clear where marks were awarded (or not) and OSCE marking seemed appropriate. A review of the practice workbooks indicate that they are comprehensive and set at the right level.

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

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

This is my second year as External Examiner for the MPharm programme. It is clear from both of my visits that the programme benefits from a dedicated teaching staff who are motivated to enhance the student learning experience on a continual basis.

This year, unlike last year, the Examination Board spreadsheets were not available to the internal staff until the morning of the visit of the External Examiners. This meant that the internal staff had not had the opportunity to go through the spreadsheets beforehand. I am told that this is because of a delay with the IT system being unable to handle zero-weighted modules. This means that staff are not able to focus any mark-checking around those papers where a small alteration in the marks would have an effect on the overall classification as it is not possible for staff to identify which students are close to a classification borderline in advance of the External Examiners' visit.

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)

The use of critical fails within the OSCE assessments follows best practice for this type of assessment. I have reviewed a selection of the OSCE results across the years and it is clear why students have failed the exercises. The use of critical fails within these exercises are appropriate and utilised fairly within the exercises. I am aware that there are some discussions on the appropriateness of the use of critical fails; in my view, these are entirely appropriate for OSCE-style assessments in MPharm programmes.

While I commend the use of anonymous marking on the main examination scripts, using the students' number, rather than a separate candidate number does risk undoing some of the anonymity, as the start of the student number does indicate, in a majority of cases, the year the student started. Therefore, for some students they could be inappropriately interpreted as being weaker owing to repeat years, etc.

Rounding of marks - I understand that rounding of marks occurs at both the assessment-level and the module-level. Coupled with the secondary rule, I wonder if this is causing some mark-slippage for some students.

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?	✓		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?	✓		
Draft Examination Question Papers				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	✓		
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	✓		
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	✓		
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?	✓		
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	✓		
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	✓		
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	✓		
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	✓		
Coursework and Practical Assessments				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	✓		
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	✓		
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	✓		
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	✓		
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?	✓		
Examining Board Meeting				

8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	✓		
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	✓		
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?	✓		
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?			✓
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?			✓
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?			✓
8.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?			✓
8.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?			✓
8.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?			✓
8.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?			✓
8.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?			✓
8.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?			✓
8.30	Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations. <i>Please provide any comments you may wish to make on the issues raised above.</i>			

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