

## 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](mailto:ExternalExaminers@cardiff.ac.uk).

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Prof. Henrietta O'Connor		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Leicester		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	Sociology (UGR)  BA/BSc/BSc(Econ)/LLB (Sociology and Social Science modules)		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2016-2017	Date of Report:	20/6/17

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)

This is appropriate for the level of award. The curriculum is well-designed, the programme structure is logical and well-planned and the methods of teaching and learning are exemplary.

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

The academic standards adhered to in this programme are robust and rigorous and comparable to other UK HEIs with which I am familiar.

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

For each module that I examine the module handbooks are clear and explain all elements of the module including the aims, learning outcomes and the assessment process. The students are provided with all the information required from an early stage and in an accessible format.

The standards between modules of the same level are comparable.

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

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

My main comment here is one I always make and that is that on some modules I think students are given too much choice over questions. For example, on more than one module students are given up to ten essay questions and are required to answer only one. This could be streamlined for the benefit of staff and students.

Learning Central has been introduced during my term of office and overall this is a welcome development. However, I would like to have had earlier notice of work being uploaded and to have been sent a reminder of login details alongside the notification of work being posted online. The general proliferation of passwords and login details for various professional roles means that it can be hard to keep track of access details for systems that are used only at certain points of the year. It would save time and effort of a reminder was sent alongside each batch of work.

**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)

Overall the teaching and learning practice is excellent and there are examples of innovation in teaching methods and assessment across the modules.

I saw some examples of very high quality assessment (S10240) – a fantastic cover sheet used by the markers which could be adopted across all modules. I was not sure if students received a copy of this pro-forma but this could be an excellent feedback tool if they were given access.

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

My experience at Cardiff has been excellent and I have been impressed by the professionalism and dedication of the academic staff and the professional services staff. I have also been impressed with the work I have seen from students during my

appointment period. Some outstanding work is produced at Cardiff and students are well-supported to achieve the best they can.

I have been particularly impressed with the work and employment module offered to students in the School of Social Science. This is an outstanding module which seems to me to truly embed employability skills to the curriculum whilst simultaneously providing students with a sociologically informed understanding of the world of work in which they are absorbed during the module.

I have also been impressed with the standard of the dissertations. Many of those that I have seen have been of a high standard and illustrate that the research training and supervisory support on offer is excellent and that the students themselves have developed their skills as social scientists over three years at Cardiff to great effect.

During the course of my appointment there was a brief hiatus in process and procedure (e.g. sending out samples in a timely fashion and keeping examiners informed of key dates etc.). I reported on this in an earlier report and am pleased to say that this issue, which I believe was due to restructuring of professional services staff across the institution, appears to have been largely resolved.

It has been a pleasure to be part of the external examining team at Cardiff and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn about the programmes and the students.

## 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?	x		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?		x	
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	x		
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	x		
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	x		
<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?	x		
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	x		
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	x		

8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	x		
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	x		
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	x		
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	x		
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	x		
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	x		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			x
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	x		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?		x	
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?			x
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?	x		
<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?			x
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			x
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			x
<b>Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)</b>				
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?			x
8.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?			x
8.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?			x
8.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?			x
8.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?			x

8.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?			<b>x</b>
8.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?			<b>x</b>
8.30	<b>Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations.</b> <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](mailto: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