

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report via the Cardiff University Intranet [here](#) and from ExternalExaminers@cardiff.ac.uk.

Cardiff University

McKenzie House
30-36 Newport Road
Cardiff CF24 0DE
Wales UK

Tel please see below
Fax +44(0)29 2087 4130

www.cardiff.ac.uk

Prifysgol Caerdydd

Tŷ McKenzie
30-36 Heol Casnewydd
Caerdydd CF24 0DE
Cymru Y Deyrnas Unedig

Ffôn gweler isod
Ffacs +44(0)29 2087 4130

www.caerdydd.ac.uk

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Janice Ellis		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Newcastle University		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	Bachelor of Dental Surgery		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018-19	Date of Report:	17.05.19

Please complete all information in the spaces provided and submit within **six weeks** of the Examining Board (the dissertation 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 General Data Protection Regulation (2018).

Please extend spaces where necessary.

1. Programme Structure (curriculum design, programme structure and level, methods of teaching and learning)

The curriculum design and programme structure would appear to align well to the Learning Outcomes and Educational Standards as prescribed by the dental professions regulatory body – the GDC. Whilst unable to fully assess mapping of all GDC ILO’s to the taught and assessed curriculum, the scope of assessment observed during the Finals examination, did not cause me any concern that there were significant deficient areas.

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

The candidates presenting for examination demonstrated academic standards that were comparable with those of my own institution and other UK HEI’s at which I have acted as external examiner for BDS Finals examinations.

Of particular note was the breadth of topic areas included within the students’ finals year projects. This extended writing task, which requires consideration of the evidence base, clearly supported students skill development, as evidenced by their ability to refer to the same during their viva examinations.

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

The finals examination combines a number of assessments in a range of various formats that are appropriate to the degree programme aims and ILO's. These include assessment of underpinning knowledge through written examinations of a "multiple short answer" format, unseen clinical case based discussions in a viva format, in-course components that assess clinical competence, and research and extended writing capability.

As a degree that enables registration with a professional regulatory body the assessment is necessarily subject to alignment with the concept of a 'safe beginner' as defined by the regulatory body. All assessments are consequently subject to a standard setting process that then requires rescaling to the University's common scale of degree classification.

The processes and standards that I observed were well aligned to other programmes I have worked with within the UK, the assessments were wide ranging and appropriately challenging for the students.

There are a number of areas where I would like to suggest further consideration could be given to improve the assessment strategy currently in place.

1. Unseen case viva's

- a. The programme team clearly make every effort to ensure examiners are well aligned, however there is still some degree of intra- and inter –examiner variability noticeable. A more structured question set would go some way to improve alignment.
- b. The School already has in place excellent calibration resources but I was unconvinced that these are being used to their full potential and would suggest greater time is allowed between examiners viewing the resource, and receiving feedback and the examination itself.
- c. I would strongly suggest the exam board reconsider the use of a "Veto fail". This approach has been discredited in the medical & dental education community for some time now and is difficult to defend.
- d. The mark sheets and the scale needs to be amended slightly to align to the standard of the safe beginner and the common grade scale.

2. Written Papers

These are wide ranging and cover all the topic areas one would expect at the level of final BDS.

- a. The attempt to equally weight questions is thwarted by the marking scheme and inclusion of half marks.
- b. A number of questions would have benefitted from more stringent quality assurance processes. For example where follow-up questions 'hint at' or more overtly provide answers for opening questions on that topic.
- c. A modified Anghoff approach is used for standard setting however scrutiny of the standard setting process would suggest that several of the questions are only standard set by 2 or 3 academics. I would suggest that a minimum of 5 raters is required in order to have improved confidence in the standards. The school may wish to consider utilising general dental

practitioners who deliver sessional teaching within the school to support this process. Whilst these individual will need a degree of training they are likely to have good insight into the concept of a safe beginner, especially if they have been involved in Dental Foundation training.

4. **Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)** (sample of dissertations received, appropriateness of marking schemes, standard of internal marking, classification of awards)

[Where possible please complete this section following the dissertation examining board determining the final award.]

Not applicable.

5. **Year-on-Year Comments**

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

6. **Preparation for the role of External Examiner (for new External Examiners only)** (appropriateness of briefing provided by the programme team and supporting information, visits to School, ability to meet with students, arrangements for accessing work to review)

I was provided with adequate information relating to the BDS programme and the finals examination ahead of my attendance at the examination, in addition to being given access to on-line resources pertinent to the process.

I had adequate opportunity to access written examination scripts, case reports, and final year projects. I was provided with evidence of examiners undertaking double marking and processes supporting moderation when examiners were divergent in their opinion.

I was able to meet with the students and gain their feedback on the examination processes.

7. **Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement** (good and innovative practice in learning, teaching and assessment; opportunities for enhancement of learning opportunities)

The students were given exceptional support during the viva examinations, particularly by the administrative support staff and the nursing staff.

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

9. 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				
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?		N	
Commenting on draft examination question papers				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?		N	
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
Examination scripts				
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?		N	
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		
Coursework and practical assessments				
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		
Clinical examinations (if applicable)				

9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?	Y		
Sampling of work				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
Examining board meeting				
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		
Joint examining board meeting (if applicable)				
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

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

Additional Comments:

9.2 My understanding is that whilst changes are planned for the final year cohort 2020-21, such changes have been planned and approved for some time and precede my appointment. I had the opportunity to discuss these changes with the schools assessment lead, and am confident that the planned changes have the potential to enhance the assessment of the programme.

9.3 The students undertake three written papers which contribute to their final examination outcome, in September of their final year. The drafting and finalisation of these papers preceded my appointment and I was therefore unable to comment. However, resit papers were required for two candidates and I was given the opportunity to review these papers.

9.8 As scripts are double blind marked I was not able to review the marking.

