

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

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Prof Michael Vassallo		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	MET 551, MET552, MET553, MET554, MET557, MET558 Dissertations: 0845113, 0839863		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018/19	Date of Report	1 st October 2019

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 course on Ageing Health and Disease (MSc) at Cardiff University has been running for several years. It provides professionals and graduates working in health, social care and other fields the opportunity for in-depth study into ageing and the complex health and complex social needs of older people. It can be taken full time over 50 weeks or on a part time basis. The full-time course starts in September with approximately nine months for the taught stage plus three months for the dissertation. The course continues to attract a range of health care professionals nationally and internationally which reflects the multidisciplinary makeup of the work force in the speciality as well as the broad appeal of the course. The thought stage consists of 3 compulsory modules (Foundations of Geriatric Medicine, Physical and Mental Health and The Organisation and Delivery of Care) as well as 3 further optional modules (Research Methods in Ageing, Health and Disease; Stroke; Neurodegenerative Disease and Dementia; Bone Health, Falls and Frailty). After the modular stage the students' progress to dissertation. This relates to subjects on Ageing, Health and Disease. The compulsory modules cover core areas that are relevant to all specialists in Geriatric Medicine. They draw on current knowledge and research. As candidates are also given a choice of optional modules they can tailor

the areas of study to their needs making the course relevant to the individual and increasing its practical value. The modular nature of the course encourages application of knowledge and personal reflection to enhance learning. The teaching methods in my view help develop the candidate's skills in problem-solving and critical analysis. The modules include all the major areas of knowledge one would expect from an MSc qualification in Ageing Health and Disease and gives the students the abilities and skills needed to develop understanding and competence in the subject.

The course uses various teaching methods ranging from direct teaching blocks with face-to-face activity taking place on site followed by a period of directed and self-directed study finishing with a consolidation block. The board is very proactive in reviewing these methods and at the last board blended teaching was discussed with a view of developing more convenient ways of delivering teaching with the aim of making the course friendlier to the needs of students subscribing to it.

The organisation of the course is excellent and there is good rapport between the administrators of the course and those teaching on it. The administration is very professional and efficient. The course website is excellently designed, modern and covers all the information students would want to know. The link to ask for further information is clearly visible for those requiring it. All members of the board have a good understanding of the aims and content of the course and can discuss the strengths and weaknesses of students individually showing a very commendable attention to detail. Trainees in difficulty are supported well and compassionately. I have not been made aware of any pending issues raised by students that are unresolved. When these arose they were handled very effectively by the whole team. This close working between administration and teachers enables the delivery a bespoke teaching programme that meets the individual requirements of both full time and part-time students. .

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

Submitted written work for the 2018/19 academic year was examined by 2 examiners. There are written benchmark statements appropriate for Diploma and Masters Qualifications. Assessments are marked against these statements. These statements are in line with University guidelines and meet national Professional Accreditation, Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies benchmarks. Assessments are marked against latest evidence base for the management of various conditions that is relevant to the health of the wider population. The assessments are fit for purpose for developing knowledge to deliver safe and effective care. All candidates discussed at the exam board were successful in passing. The board has a rigorous process for the award of distinctions. As expected the quality of work was variable with some doing enough to pass and better candidates performing well. As external examiner, I had several opportunities to examine a variety of work of all candidates including 2 dissertations and modular work as highlighted above. The marking of the internal examiners was fair and followed the set benchmark statements. There was also good agreement between examiners. I was in agreement with the marks given and felt that candidates are being assessed at the correct standard.

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

There is regular course work spread out over the course. Work submitted was in the form of essays or dissertations. These cover the course curriculum well. Topics of the dissertations were very relevant to the field of Geriatrics and Gerontology and they were fairly marked. There was an interim Exam Board in November 2018. I joined this via teleconference. As external examiner I was able to read the 2 dissertations before the meeting, and I am satisfied with the marking that was appropriate and fair to standard of the dissertations. As mentioned before there is a very cohesive team including tutors and administrators running the course and this facilitates frank and open discussion about any issues or difficult cases. Candidates who do not reach pass standard in individual assignments are offered the opportunity to re-submit within an appropriate timescale that is agreed with the student. Both the administrators and tutors are sensitive to the needs of candidates and cater for individual circumstances. From the exam board it was clear that Tutors offer appropriate support to students in the submission of such work.

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.]

I received 2 dissertations for review. The topics chosen were very interesting and relevant to the course. The dissertations were well written although in some the standard of English could be improved. This is however understandable as English was not the first language of the authors. Importantly however the authors in all dissertations were able to convey information, ideas and concepts with sufficient clarity for marking. The marking is rigorous and structured. They were marked by 2 examiners independently of each other. There was good agreement between the examiners. As External examiner I agreed with the marks given. Discussion took place at exam board about classification of awards which was fair and compliant with equality and diversity guidelines.

5. Year-on-Year Comments

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

This was the second academic year that I oversaw. In my opinion the outputs of the course reflect the expectations laid in the prospectus and website. The assessment methods are appropriate and discussions at the exam board suggest very good academic and pastoral support for the students.

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 appointed in August 2017. I had a very good induction and support from admin staff who were excellent and flexible in completing the formal appointments process. I have been provided login details to access Cardiff University website that contains very useful resources. I have been sent work for review via email. The admin team remain particularly supportive and helpful in answering ongoing queries and providing information.

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

The structure of the course remains strong and the mix of mandatory and optional modules strike a good balance of delivering the core knowledge required as well as providing the opportunity for individual preference for study. In my opinion this keeps the Cardiff course attractive in relation to various other MSc courses in ageing. The team are proactive in advertising the course at various regional and national meetings. Tutors on the course also know the students well and apart from teaching and supervision also are available for pastoral support. The feedback after assignments is excellent in supporting development of students. Finally there remain excellent working relationships between the course organisers, tutors and administrators that facilitate the running of the course to a high standard. I attended the business meeting after the exam board and succession planning is ongoing with some members unable to continue supporting the course but plans in place for appropriate replacements.

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

Not applicable this year

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?	Y		
Commenting on draft examination question papers				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?			N/A
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?			N/A
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			N/A
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?	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		
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?			N/A
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	Y		

	established procedures and to your satisfaction?			
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	
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			

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