



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Clare Wilkinson		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of the West of England, Bristol		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MSc in Science, Media and Communication		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2012/13	Date of Report:	22/07/13

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 MSc in Science, Media and Communication remains a clearly structured programme of study. It offers students an opportunity to consider practical aspects of the communication process, for instance the chance to examine and reflect science centre communication, alongside space for deeper levels of critical examination regarding the relationship between science and society, explored from the perspective of social science. Offering students this combination of pragmatic and more critical explorations can have its challenges, and the programme team are well placed to deliver this broad level of content. My examination of materials does not include all modules within this programme, and so it is difficult to give a complete perspective. However, those that I am able to examine do not raise any concerns from a programme specification perspective.

### 2. Academic Standards

It is my impression that this programme is achieving and delivering a comparable standard of content to other UK-based programmes in this area.

### 3. The Assessment Process

Detailed feedback has been provided to the programme team on all work that has been sent for examination. This has raised a number of specific minor comments but few issues of major concern.

Assessments are set which require them to consider themes appropriate to modules, whilst still allowing students a degree of freedom in focussing on topics of interest to them. In general, students are provided with very constructive, detailed and useful feedback on the part of markers.

The changes to the assessment for one module, Presenting Science, have been welcome for this year. However in comparison to other modules on the programme (in particular Science in the Risk Society) equity of expectations may need to be monitored. The assessment related to this module came through relatively late and so this is only an observation at this stage. However it is something which the programme team may wish to keep in mind when examining materials next year.

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

The programme team have been very open to suggestions made over the last two years and responded to any issues both positively and honestly.

The response on the report provided last year gave a clear indication as to how comments had been addressed. It was helpful to see that some of the changes recommended (in particular comments around repetition across two modules) had been actioned in the work provided this year.

Related to 8.16 below – Although there was sufficient time to examine materials, these appeared to be provided in closer proximity to boards this year and more time would be appreciated.

Related to 8.17-8.18 below – It is my understanding that attendance is now required at a board meeting in the Autumn for this programme, rather than over the summer, as occurred last year.

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

n/a.

#### **6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement**

Firstly, the opportunities for students to spend time in local museums and centres remains a useful aspect of this programme. Though coordinating a programme over two schools and an external partner is likely to be challenging, this remains a novel and attractive approach.

Secondly, numbers on some modules do appear to be decreasing and perhaps the University might consider how to better support recruitment to this programme.

Finally, a short paragraph or two from module leaders on any issues with modules/cohorts etc., as well as updated module guides, might be useful when sending through assessment materials for review. This would provide helpful context when examining the materials.

#### **7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)**

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)
<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>				

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
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

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

[ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk](mailto: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