



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report and are available at <http://learning.cf.ac.uk/quality/review/external-examiners/reports/>.

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Eustace Johnson		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Chester		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report	MSc Tissue Engineering		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2016-17	Date of Report:	20-11-2017

For completion by External Examiner in the spaces provided. Please extend spaces where necessary. **Please note this Form will be published online and should not make any reference to any individual students or members of staff.**

### 1. Programme Structure

The Masters degree encompasses an array of taught elements that give an excellent grounding in subject matter relevant to tissue engineering, including essential research methods/skills, molecular and cellular biology, ECM and cell-ECM interactions, and stem cell biology. The modules compliment each other and help prepare the students well for completion of a relevant research dissertation. This structure is well thought through and appropriate.

### 2. Academic Standards

There are a lot of detailed and specific learning outcomes for each module, which are of an appropriate standard in meeting with national academic standards and in line with my experience of other Masters courses. The assessed course work and exam scripts were generally of a good/very standard, with some examples of excellent performances.

### 3. The Assessment Process

- A combination of assessment methods is employed to evaluate how well the learning outcomes are met. These include presentations, essays and examinations, combined with a detailed research dissertation in an area that fits with the MSc subject matter.
- The assessments are well aligned with the learning outcomes, e.g., use of data and statistical analysis software in research skills and through completion of the dissertation, in-depth essays for critical evaluation of specific topics in tissue engineering or stem cell biology, oral and poster presentations for elements of the transferable skills.

- It may be that I missed some of the on line provision, but it would be very helpful to have annotated exam scripts, coursework/essays (and the dissertation/posters) to better understand the allocation of marks. In addition/alternatively, a summary of feedback for the various assessments would be useful to understand how marks have been allocated. This was provided for some, but not all aspects of the assessed work.

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

I have noted comments provided by the previous EE and will take this into account as I get to know the course better and comments on staff/student outputs in future reports. At this stage, I would echo previous comments relating to having well annotated scripts to be able to better see where marks were coming from.

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

I am very grateful to the staff at Cardiff in providing on-line access to the student's work in preparation for assessing this course. It was good to come to Cardiff to meet the team. Generally, this access to coursework and exam scripts was clearly signposted, but it would be helpful to have a more readily accessible system. There were problems in accessing the material and in the end the dissertations needed to be made available through an alternative method. This could be a Firefox problem from my end, but when time is short it is a nuisance.

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

As this is my first year of acting as EE there will be more to say in future, but I particularly like the alignment of course content as well as the research dissertations with research interests and expertise of the teaching staff. Course content that covers the translation of research in stem cell biology, regenerative medicines and tissue engineering to clinical application, including consideration of logistic and ethical issues gives the course is commendable and encourages critical awareness.

The dissertations that were focussed on other aspects of biomedical research were also clearly highly relevant to tissue engineering, e.g., the use of cell tracers and imaging in cancer models fits well with cell transplantation therapies. Having students working in areas that meet with the research interests/expertise of the supervisory staff is good practice, as is providing a supervisory team. It also was noteworthy that a good number of the students were able to experience a variety of practical techniques, which will enhance their knowledge and understanding and help put them in a good position to progress to PhD/related employment.

#### **7. Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations (External Examiners for postgraduate Master's Programmes only, see also 9.23-9.29 below)**

Reviewing the outputs of the dissertation module is a great help when it comes to evaluating the success or otherwise of a Masters programme and whether or not the learning outcomes have been achieved. In many ways, it represents the fruition of the course. So, I was glad to be able to see these (and the posters that form part of the assessment) later in the programme and waiting for this helps compile a single report.

The dissertations were varied in content and generally of a good to very good standard, with some examples of really excellent work. The marks awarded are in

keeping with those awarded for other masters programmes and seem fair, with perhaps one exception to the rule where the presented poster and dissertation fell short of what was awarded – in my book – although I can see that this was a technically demanding project. Overall though, no signs of grade inflation!

As commented earlier, it would be helpful to see more annotation/commentary on the dissertations or in summary form to see where marks have been awarded and where the markers were looking for improvements. I would also be keen to meet with the students to discuss their research if this were possible, as this is a useful process in seeing how successfully the programme has worked – although I appreciate that everyone’s commitments and timetabling restrictions make this very difficult.

## 8. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

## 9. Annual Report Checklist

Please include appropriate comments within Sections 1-8 above for any answer of ‘No’.

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
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	
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	Y		
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
<b>Marking Examination Scripts</b>				
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		
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
9.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	Y		

		<b>Yes (Y)</b>	<b>No (N)</b>	<b>N/A (N/A)</b>
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		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			<b>N/A</b>
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				
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		
<b>Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)</b>				
9.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>NA</b>
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>NA</b>
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			<b>NA</b>
<b>Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)</b>				
9.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?	Y		
9.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?	Y		
9.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?	Y		
9.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?		<b>N</b>	
9.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?			<b>NA</b>
9.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?	Y		
9.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?	Y		

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

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

### **SAMPLING OF TAUGHT MASTER'S DISSERTATIONS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

External Examiners shall be expected to see prescribed numbers and ranges of Dissertations, but not to mark them, on the following basis:

At least 10% of Dissertations for a postgraduate taught Master's Programme, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure) must be seen by the External Examiner(s). Where the total number is less than 10, all Dissertations must be seen by the External Examiner(s) #.

Dissertations seen by External Examiners should include examples from across the whole range of achievement (i.e. Pass with Distinction, Pass, Fail).

External Examiners will retain the right to see other Dissertations at random.

# Where more than one External Examiner is appointed on a Programme, at least 10% of Dissertations, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure), should be seen collectively by the External Examiners.