

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:	Professor Pieter de Wilde		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Plymouth University, Devon, UK		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	MSc Environmental Design of Buildings (EDB)		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2017-2018	Date of Report:	6 June 2018

Please complete all information in the spaces provided and submit within **six weeks** of the Examining Board.

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)

This is an existing Masters that is offered through both an on-site as well as a distance-learning mode. It shares a range of core modules with other Master offerings in the school, notably the MSc in Sustainable Megabuildings (MEGA). Beyond this students undertake a number of dedicated modules that are unique to EDB. This is my second examination of the programme; only minor course changes have taken place in the last year. Student numbers remain healthy and have grown, with 18 students taking the course in Cardiff, and another 17 taking the course through distance learning. The methods of teaching and learning are appropriate for the level and challenge the students to demonstrate MSc level.

Students appear to be happy with the course as offered. The new student base is highly appreciated. Only comment was that students would like more computing facilities, as the number of machines does not match the number of students on the course and at time leads to bottlenecks.

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

The academic standards for EDB are high and fully comparable with similar courses within the UK. As observed previous year it is obvious that the academic staff have to cope with a wide range of prior learning, with students that have an international background and that may come from either architecture or engineering degrees; however the course is structured in such a way that each of these categories of students will get some benefits from their background as well as challenges to allow them to develop themselves.

I reviewed most of the material provided for review, with some deeper exploration of marks at the top, middle and lower end. Marks provided were in line with my own expectations and assessment. It was noted that some modules had marks in a rather narrow band (50-70% and 60-80%); it is recommended that the team reviews whether there are opportunities to get a wider spread.

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

Overall marks provided were clearly based on a transparent assessment process, with good feedback to the students and signposting of where additional marks could have been earned. The feedback is ok for all modules, but there are some variations in the amount of feedback provided; some standardization may be beneficial?

An issue that the team still needs to review is the audit trail of the moderation process. While I have no doubt that moderation takes place, this is not clearly signposted and might leave the staff at risk from potential student complaints. I recommend that you use a clear moderation form and keep track of all efforts in this domain.

An other suggestion is a review of the amount of formative feedback given. For some modules a presentation early on in the timetable may help to ensure student engagement early on in the module.

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

Dissertations were reviewed in Spring, and feedback was provided separately. In general the sample offered was good and marking fine.

5. Year-on-Year Comments

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

The work offered for review is almost completely digital, which works well in principle. However, the posters are hard to read on a regular laptop. Please print a sample on paper, or provide large TV screens to allow us to study these as a whole, rather than having to move a view across the elements of the poster.

A suggestion that may require deeper restructuring of the programme is whether the amount of modules can be reduced; in total there are now 9, which is a high number, and some of these only count for 10 credits. Could you have less modules and thereby ease your workload?

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)

(Not applicable)

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

As noted in the previous year, the distance learning element of the EDB course seems to be doing extremely well. The team is commended for the hard work that goes into this extra load.

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

(Not applicable)

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?	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		
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?			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