

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:	Keith Brain		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Birmingham		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	Pharmacy; particularly modules PH2113, PH3113 and PH4116		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018-19	Date of Report:	25 th June 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)

Pharmacology content is well distributed throughout several different modules, forming the core of two modules. I focussed on module contain much of the core pharmacology: PH2113 (Diseases and Drugs 1) and PH3113 (Diseases and Drugs 2) as well as those research projects with a Pharmacology focus. The year 2 and 3 modules have an appropriate mix of physiology, pharmacology, pathophysiology and therapeutics. There is an appropriately diverse range of teaching modes of delivery.

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

The Pharmacy programme in Cardiff is one of the oldest and most respected Pharmacy degrees in the county. Academic standards are consistent with this historical position and those expected of Pharmacy courses across the country. In addition, there are appropriate responses to changing professional needs, with the programme also predicting future trends in order to appropriately train the next generation of Pharmacists.

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 an appropriate range of assessment processes and forms, including MCQs, short answer questions, 'critical analysis' essays and OSCEs. Practical tasks are assessed targeting procedures that are important for a career in Pharmacy. In reviewing examination scripts, I found the markers' justifications particularly clear, aided by the use of standardized abbreviations.

Questions ranged in difficulty, allowing the best students to shine while providing appropriate pass/fail discrimination; there were comparable standards between modules of the same level.

In some modules there was heavy repetition of the questions from year to year; this was a higher rate than my institutions guidelines would allow. Students were aware of the heavy repetition and alluded to information about the scope of exam papers being passed down from year-to-year. One student reported that she was disappointed that this allowed some students to avoid topics rarely covered in the exams. This can lead to problems of unequal access and cliques. One way of avoiding this is to have a programme policy that a certain proportion of questions in each year in the main sit period should be new questions; the guide is 'at least' 20% at my home institution.

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

Double-marking of dissertations independent of the supervisor with a clear protocol for dealing with disagreement (and an adequate audit trail identifying the route to the final mark) was in place. The marking schemes were clear and there was helpful structured feedback provided to the students. Students achieved well given their relatively brief time dedicated to the projects.

5. Year-on-Year Comments

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

Responses to my previous report were timely and appropriate. For example, procedures for checking the additions of marks are stronger.

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)

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

Allowing all students to have access to their examination scripts (after the board and under controlled conditions) is a higher level of feedback than is available in many other comparable institutions, and does enhance the student experience.

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

As in any professional programme, there is an ongoing need for incremental change to match the needs of the profession and the changing desires of the students. The programme has very appropriately adapted, identifying any problems as they arise and proactively providing innovative teaching and assessment methods. The most significant change I've seen is in the marking of the final-year dissertations, where there is now much more marking consistency between disciplines and less unconscious bias (by removing the supervisor marks). There is perhaps still an opportunity to consider one marking rubric is sufficient to cover all project types. The key ongoing issues, however, relates to the aggregation of clinical assessments into large chunks which can be failed *en bloc*. This is matter which is being actively and appropriately considered by the programme team, and is something that they had identified without being prompted by the external examiners.

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?	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?	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?			
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