



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Nina Hallowell		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Edinburgh		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MSC Genetic Counselling		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2014-2015	Date of Report:	17/07/2014

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 programme is well-structured covering a number of academic and vocational elements.

2. Academic Standards

This course is taught to a very high specification as is evidenced by the high levels of attainment of the students. It compares well with competitor courses in the UK and Australia.

3. The Assessment Process

Examinations

I commented on the final drafts of the examination papers earlier in the year. They were a good test of the students' learning and reflected the learning outcomes outlined in course documentation.

With regard to marking, I have looked at a sample of high, low and middle marks from all the examinations and sampled a variety of scripts from the all examinations when I visited the day before the July exam board. While the top scripts were of high quality, and marked accordingly, I felt the marking of the less strong scripts in some of the exams requiring discursive answers was a little generous on occasion. I have discussed the need to use the full extent of the marking scale so that the range of marks is wider than is currently the case.

Written Assignments

I have looked at a sample of written assignments from a number of modules and, like last year, believe the quality of the written assignments is particularly high. I found

the case studies and process records particularly interesting and of a very high quality. I also liked receiving the assignments with the turnitin comments appended as this confirmed that the students are receiving extensive and very helpful feedback on their assignments. I would like to emphasise that I feel that the level of feedback given to students across the board is extremely high; it is constructive and helpful and if followed should enable students to develop their skills. With regard to the marking of the written assignments I was gratified to see that there was a tendency to use a greater proportion of the marking scale than mentioned above.

Dissertation

I examined a number of dissertations earlier in the year and these were discussed at the January exam board. With one or two exceptions these were of a very high quality and I have heard some of the students present the findings of their dissertations at a scientific meeting, where they were extremely well-received.

General comments on marking of module assessments and examinations

I cannot fault the marking of module assessments it is fair and very transparent and I am assured that the introduction of generalised marking schemes/criteria will maintain this state of affairs. I am feel that the marking of examinations could be improved a little, so that the marks obtained discriminate the students more clearly, I have suggested that a random sample of those examinations requiring discursive answers should be internally moderated next year.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

This is my full first year as examiner

****General comments on the conduct of the exam board.** This was carried out with efficiency and I was happy with the performance of the exam board.

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

n/a

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

The course is managed and administered well. This academic year I have visited Cardiff on three occasions. Twice to attend examination boards plus PMMs – January and July – and once to meet the second and first years students and attend a PMM. On each occasion I have been welcomed and treated with courtesy. As I said in my report in 2014, I am particularly impressed by the dedication of the teaching team, all of whom are determined to give the students the best learning experience and training that they can, and from the quality of the work I reviewed they have achieved this goal.

Finally, I would particularly like to thank [REDACTED], the course administrator. This was [REDACTED] first year in the post and my first full year as examiner. Despite her heavy workload she has been very helpful, answering my questions by return of email. She is setting up new pathways that will streamline the examining process in the future. I visited Cardiff the day before the July exam board to do some random sampling of students' work and Beth prepared everything in advance of my visit and was extremely helpful in organising this.h

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)
Programme/Course Information				
8.1	Did you receive sufficient information about the Programme and its contents, learning outcomes and assessments?	y		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?	y		
Draft Examination Question Papers				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	y		
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	y		
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	y		
Marking Examination Scripts				
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?	y		
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	y		
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	y		
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	y		
8.10	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				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	y		
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	y		
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	y		
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	y		
Clinical Examinations (if applicable)				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?	y		
Sampling of Work				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	y		
Examining Board Meeting				

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	y		
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	Y **		
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?	y		
Joint Examining Board Meeting (if applicable)				
8.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?			na
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			na
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			na

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

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