

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY External Examiner Annual Report Form



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:	Ed Fraser		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	School of Journalism		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	MA/PgDip in Broadcast Journalism and dissertations for the MA in Journalism		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2019/2020	Date of Report:	July 2020

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)

This has been a particularly challenging period during the Covid-19 Lockdown. In the External Examiners view the MA in Broadcast Journalism is of a high quality. It is widely recognised across the media industry in the UK as a programme which gives students an exceptional grounding in the founding principles of broadcast journalism and the tenets of Media Law and Public Administration. The course sets out to deliver the vital and necessary practical skills and experience relevant to the fast paced and ever-changing media landscape. Students learn editorial and multiplatform skills and build their newsgathering and story-telling production skills. The programme is challenging for the most able and offers a good grounding for all. This is a course well adapted to help prepare students for the world of work in broadcast journalism within a news environment.

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

In the external examiners view the programme is working hard to maintain the academic threshold standards set for its award in accordance with the QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications. The course is accredited by the

Commented [MW1]: It might be wise to say something about the PRSB (industry accreditor) the Broadcast Journalism Training Council here. Something like "The course is accredited by the Broadcast Journalism Training Council and not only meets, but exceeds the requirements of the body."

Broadcast Journalism Training Council and not only meets, but appears to exceed the requirements of the body. Cardiff is exceptionally well-respected across the media industry. The student intake should be of the highest calibre and be representative of the diversity of modern Britain. Prospective journalists with strong skills, good values and good character remain vital to the lifeblood of the media in the UK. The course takes students with varied level of ability and potential and helps them all make real progress. There is a mix of final attainment levels – some at the very highest level and nearly all with good competence.

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

I believe the assessment is well designed and applied.

Students are measured, assessed and the learning outcomes appear to be fairly applied. I don't believe there are any urgent issues that require review. The tutor staff appear to be committed to their work. The assessors appear adept at identifying the particular strengths and offer clear critical feedback to the students identifying the relative merits and failings in the work. Accuracy, fairness and due impartiality is assessed across the written course work and the practical production during the course. This is no easy ride for the students who are robustly critiqued should they be found wanting with poor writing, poor story choice or methodology when deemed necessary.

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

[Where possible please complete this section following the dissertation examining board determining the final award.]

Not Applicable

5. Year-on-Year Comments

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

Unfortunately due to the Covid19 crisis I was unable to attend Cardiff in person. However from what I have seen online and identified the course remains robust, strong and delivering. The course provides a critical grounding for students preparing to enter newsrooms. It is important to retain the fundamentals as Cardiff does that make up the core skillset for all journalists. Accuracy, accuracy, accuracy in world which has become sadly more accustomed to fake news and identifying any nuance in any story narrative. The mastery of storytelling remains critical – without storytelling we cannot make impact. Impartiality, law for journalists, exceptional writing, good interviewing, unearthing stories and production skills. Changing systems and technical skills can always be adapted later.

I think its vital that we see some more digital work coming through from the students which has now become a fundamental bedrock of our industry underpinning much of the broadcast work. Cardiff must maintain its relevance in a fast evolving digital world. The skills in editing and stylistic made-for-platform digital content are a necessary tool in every young journalists armoury with the ability to take those skills and apply them across Facebook, Youtube, Snapchat and Instagram. I will work

with the tutor staff to ensure that the course is able to deliver those skills into the industry with fresh talent who will be the key to helping the industry develop and evolve for the future of news.

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)

Curtailed due to Covid19 crisis with no site visit possible but full access to the course content via online portal.

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

There is good range of stories the students work on with a perceptive eye for news lines. The TV packages viewed displayed a crisp and clear understanding of the vocabulary of television reporting which must have been difficult to film and structure during the Covid crisis. Radio bulletins were smartly produced and clearly scripted with good feedback from the tutor team. One of the strengths of the Cardiff programme is the specialism students choose to focus on and this should continue. This helps to develop a depth and understanding of the real world of journalism enabling students to build contacts and expertise which is essential in the world beyond. I particularly enjoyed the CJS News (May 18th) which felt professionally presented, relevant, well scripted and editorially balanced. A great team effort from the students. Again plaudits to the students and staff given the Covid-19 environment.

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

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?	X		
9.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?		X	
Commenting on draft examination question papers				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?			X
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?			
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			
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?			
9.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?			
9.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?			
9.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?			
9.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?			
Coursework and practical assessments				
9.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	X		
9.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	X		
9.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	X		
9.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	X		
Clinical examinations (if applicable)				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			
Sampling of work				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	X		
Examining board meeting				
9.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?		X	

9.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with 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?	X		
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?		X	
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