



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Gina Donovan		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Canterbury Christ Church University		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	PGCE ITT (PCET) Full Time & Part time in service		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015/6	Date of Report:	June 2016

I attended as external, conducting joint visits with staff and students on professional practice over 14th and 15th March for teacher observations in placement. I also undertook programme overview - including discussion with the team; samples of marking; the provision of information and documentation relating to the current programme and to potential planned changes.

1. Programme Structure

The current programme offer provides a high quality and successful experience for full and part-time students. The provision of diverse contexts for learning and teaching continues to demonstrate significant sector knowledge and extensive engagement with partner institutions. The benefits for students are evident in the programme outcomes.

The Programme has planned a phased and iterative process of development as a considered and well-judged response to sector change. It will therefore be both timely and based on a rationale which retains the progress achieved and allows for appropriate adjustment relating to emerging changes in policy and professional practice.

There has been a long established focus on increased flexibility and sustainable modes within a high quality framework and this extended process has now resulted in a coherent set of appropriate adjustments based on evidence from cohort experience during and beyond training.

The current team has drawn on very significant expertise and experience to enhance programme quality and student experience and to respond to significant sector change. The approach taken has resulted in phased introduction of an innovative new structure. The initial intermediate changes for 2016-17 will allow for a well-managed transition and review prior to the new validation in 2017-18.

I have been pleased to note that the range and depth of consultation and preparation invested in the process and direction of programme development has resulted in a very coherent review and revision of the successful programme. This will ensure continuity and enhancement of student experience and outcomes for the future. The focus on assessment approaches and on increased flexibility for diverse contexts has proved to be a very positive move. Care has been taken to produce a model where reduction of the assessment burden accompanies rigour in terms of quality.

I am very pleased to note the innovative work from the team with new expertise contributing significant additional value to the programme offer and enhancing student experience. I understand that this has had a direct impact on the interim and final planned development for 2017-18.

Use of appropriate digital technologies forms a key element of the programme structure and is in line with their importance for teaching, learning and assessment. This will act as a means by which the team can assure improved access and responsiveness for programme operation.

2. Academic Standards

Standards are comparable with standards elsewhere and continue to address all the relevant criteria. The students' achievements meet requirements in terms of practical and academic standards. The team continue to apply these accurately across all assessments and to maintain accurate judgements resulting in the enhancement of experience and outcomes for students. All work in this area will be subject to continued attention particularly in the light of proposed programme changes.

The phasing of certain elements and the care taken over transition to new approaches is ensuring that academic standards are maintained throughout. In contrast to some longstanding programme offers there is a genuine openness to current and anticipated changes. This serves to promote a proactive and critical attitude to development. Students will benefit from this approach. The engagement of programme provision with the national / four nations debates and agendas at many levels means that there is very clear and current understanding of the environment and an active, informed approach of a very high standard.

Introduction to Planning for Teaching and Learning schemes and rationales are, at the higher end, integrating theory with planned practice in sophisticated and informed approaches as reflected in the accompanying rationales.

All borderline and failed work was seen and satisfactory standards were applied.

3. The Assessment Process

Assessment material has been made fully available including portfolios, access to students; to observation with staff and subsequent feedback; to presentations and moderation material etc. This confirms that the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent. All borderline and failed work was seen and satisfactory standards were applied.

The process allows for feedback but the adjustments planned will improve current practice and post session evaluation will form part of this. While the current programme enables productive group interaction this will be further developed in terms of contributing to the assessment process.

The choice of subjects for assessment continues to stimulate relevant responses across a diverse range of trainees and contexts with clear and appropriate feedback provided. High quality moderation is applied very effectively and is currently informing programme development discussions.

Discussions concerning the current assessment process and potential innovations have been open and productive and I am confident that changes will be constructive and well judged.

The Professional Teaching Project: Reflective Synoptic Narratives provide an excellent assessment point of reference as students conclude the programme journey. Its completion has a clear impact on students and this element is valued by them as well as providing significant insight for assessors to support constructive review.

The Research Enquiry Projects provide a wide range illustrate a high level of engagement with relevant themes and issues. Some excellent pieces challenging and exploring gender inclusion and ethnicity in context have been prompted by the module questions. Personal tutorials are acknowledged as an essential factor in the assessment process.

Self- evaluations have now established a greater consistency in terms of response to feedback over time.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

As before, during this visit and in correspondence with the university I have had more than adequate opportunity to contribute to the discussions relating to quality and development. Engagement with the experiences of students from a range of areas and settings has provided a clear overall view of the benefits of diverse experience in terms of their enhancement to their progress and experience.

The Professional Teaching Project has demonstrated progression in terms of research/enquiry projects showing quality and value as an element in development. Some very strong work is evident as is grounding in terms of relevant choices being

made and insight shown in terms of the scale and methods. There is significant potential here for wider dissemination of outcomes to be shared with future learners in order to establish a sustainable research resource. Themes such as gender examined in specific placement contexts; the economic impact of policy change etc. provides consideration for potential enquiry.

Developments in relation to digital technologies for teaching, learning and assessment within the programme have focussed on emerging areas to good effect.

The focus on key skills and the research informed teaching aspects of the programme raised has produced some excellent work and demonstrable benefits for students in different contexts. Further positive outcomes should emerge as these developments are extended.

There is clear evidence of strong mentor contributions making a positive impact and the quality of the selection and engagement with an extensive network of mentors remains a key element in trainee achievement.

Sustaining and developing mentor quality is therefore an area for ongoing attention particularly in the light of continuing shifts within the working environments across the sector. Approaches to supporting new and existing mentors and to consolidating the experience are vital especially in relation to assessment.

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

N/A

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

Programme development is taking place through a detailed process of consultation, analysis of evidence and consideration of the sector its politics

While approval of the programme will not potentially take place until 2017-18, there is still significant adjustment and anticipation woven into current practice, existing structure permitting

The emphasis has indeed been placed on the well being of the whole student – and the connection to the teaching and learning community overall in line with programme values.

Sessions and approaches reinforce the mental, physical and emotional dimensions of teacher/learner development and the implications of these for learning, progression and resilience in challenging circumstances and therefore must be commended.

The proposed developments to the programme will further individualise the learning experience of trainee teachers and thus to provide exemplary practice for their own current and future professional engagement with learners.

Investment has been made in support for student involvement in research and scholarly activity in the course of the programme with a view to extending such activity into communities of practice for the future.

The programme development underway demonstrates the calibre of team with its acknowledgement of challenge; interrogation at all levels of emerging areas where change is desirable and a commendable focus on increased necessity for flexible responses to sector change. I hope to see further evidence of the high quality peer support so clearly effective in the current cohort.

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?			N/A
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?			N/A
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			N/A
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		

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
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?			N/A
Sampling of Work				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
Examining Board Meeting				
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?			
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?			N/A
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			N/A
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			N/A

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

ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk

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Clive Brown, Registry Officer, Registry & Academic Services, Cardiff University,
McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE