



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report and are available at <http://learning.cf.ac.uk/quality/review/external-examiners/reports/>.

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Sarah Riley		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Aberystwyth		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report	Psychology <i>BA/BSc in Education (Psychology and Education modules)</i>		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015-16	Date of Report:	27 th June

For completion by External Examiner in the spaces provided. Please extend spaces where necessary. **Please note this Form will be published online and should not make any reference to any individual students or members of staff.**

1. Programme Structure

The programme structure seems appropriate. Although I do not have an overview of the programme, but a section of it through the modules that I review. The modules are excellent, evidencing a strong theoretical and intellectual engagement with core issues. There is a stronger flavour of social sciences thinking in the psychological work I review, which I think is a strength of the programme structure, in that psychology students take a range of modules from the social sciences.

2. Academic Standards

I saw some truly excellent work this year. Staff are to be commended: the students produced theoretically informed, intellectually strong work that was able to link theory to practice. The work often took a personal approach, so that students were able to reflect on the underlying frameworks that were informing their thinking about the subjects they studied. Even weaker students seem to grasp the key principles of critical thinking and make a clear attempt at argument. All the assignments that I reviewed were interesting; with real world relevance and which encouraged intellectual rigour.

Overall the academic standards and marks awarded for the work were comparable with the institutions with which I am familiar. Students demonstrated achievement of the subject QAA benchmarks for psychology. Critical thinking, intellectual rigour and ability to develop an argument were hall marks of the work I saw.

3. The Assessment Process

I reviewed four modules.

The marking process was clear and systematic. The full range of marks were used and assignments distinguished across student ability well. I have seen a year on year improvement with staff's use of turn it in/electronic marking in terms of using the full facilities and providing in-depth feedback. Where I suggest future developments might be in including 'feed-forward' information in the feedback. I also suggested the moderator/second markers use the marking rubric terminology to justify the mark they give an assignment.

The moderating process was clear and a strong audit trail provided. Where I see room for improvement is in providing evidence for dissertation marking. It was unclear how agreements and disagreements between markers happened or were managed. Last year I commented on this too, and if anything the process has decreased in transparency as I wasn't given information on individual markers marks, only the agreed mark.

The exam board demonstrated a duty of care to the students and was exemplary in its management.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

Year on year I am struck by the excellence in creative thinking, theoretically informed, yet personal work that the students produce. It is exceptional and staff are to be commended.

I have seen improvements in clarity of processes around marking, in all modules other than the dissertation, where the reverse has been true.

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

N/A.

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

All the assignments I reviewed were creative, innovative and interesting. There is a clear development of critical thinking in students' work – I've commented on this before, but given its importance in the kind of students we want to be producing, it's worth repeating and congratulating the team.

I also note the way all the assignments encouraged the students to engage personally with the material, and again this is quite novel to be so systematic across a programme and also commendable.

The exam boards were run efficiently and effectively, and demonstrated a duty of care to the students.

7. Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations (External Examiners for postgraduate Master's Programmes only, see also 9.23-9.29 below)

8. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

I have watched psychology in the social sciences develop to be an important and exciting part of the social sciences programme. The team deliver an excellent and original programme. I have very much enjoyed reading the work by their students, particularly the dissertations.

While I have seen an improvement in administration in terms of audit trails, this is not the case for dissertations and I would encourage my successor to consider this issue. There has also been a change in the way the administration is managed for external examiners and this has not been without significant teething problems. The external examiners need to be given a check list of what they should expect to see and where to find that information.

9. Annual Report Checklist

Please include appropriate comments within Sections 1-8 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
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?	x		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	x		
Marking 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?	x		
9.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	x		
9.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	x		
9.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	x		
9.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	x		
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?	x		

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
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?			
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?			
Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)				
9.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?			
9.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?			
9.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?			
9.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?			
9.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?			
9.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?			
9.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?			

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:

External Examiners, Registry, Cardiff University, McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE

SAMPLING OF TAUGHT MASTER'S DISSERTATIONS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

External Examiners shall be expected to see prescribed numbers and ranges of Dissertations, but not to mark them, on the following basis:

At least 10% of Dissertations for a postgraduate taught Master's Programme, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure) must be seen by the External Examiner(s). Where the total number is less than 10, all Dissertations must be seen by the External Examiner(s) #.

Dissertations seen by External Examiners should include examples from across the whole range of achievement (i.e. Pass with Distinction, Pass, Fail).

External Examiners will retain the right to see other Dissertations at random.

- # Where more than one External Examiner is appointed on a Programme, at least 10% of Dissertations, or a minimum of 10 (whichever is the higher figure), should be seen collectively by the External Examiners.