



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Professor Patrick Hayden		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of St Andrews		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MScEcon in International Relations		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2012-13	Date of Report:	28/06/13

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 structure and content are entirely consistent with a master's level programme and strike an appropriate balance between core foundational modules and optional modules. The core modules provide a solid grounding in the fundamentals of IR and in research methods. The optional modules are interesting and innovative, providing a good theoretical and regional range of ideas and issues for students.

### 2. Academic Standards

Overall academic standards are good, with students clearly being challenged by the range of modules on offer and the quality of their work reflects the aims and intended outcomes of the programme. Essay and exam questions are based around engaging with stimulating debates on topics rather than merely knowledge recall. Standards are comparable to similar programmes of study in other UK institutions with which I am familiar.

### 3. The Assessment Process

The marking criteria across the modules I examined seemed consistent and fair. A number of different methods of formative and summative assessment are employed, and operated to a very high standard of efficiency and with complete integrity. The feedback provided to students on work is excellent, providing detailed commentary helpful to the students to improve on future work.

#### **4. Year-on-Year Comments**

This is my first year as examiner for the MSc programme at Cardiff. The previous examiner did not make any concrete recommendations for changes/note any issues requiring attention last year, so there is no real need to respond to comments from the previous year.

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

All the necessary information was provided and the staff were most helpful in inducting me into the ways of Cardiff. The material was well organised, and easy to find my way around, with excellent provision of relevant documents.

#### **6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement**

I thought best practice was followed in teaching, the setting of assignments and examination papers and in the professionalism of assessment.

There is an excellent range of assessments, giving students the opportunity to develop a wide range of different skills. In particular, assessment seems to have been designed to ensure that students develop a good understanding of the whole course, rather than just specific topics that they have chosen for coursework or exam revision.

The feedback provided to students on work is excellent, providing detailed commentary helpful to the students to improve on future work. In particular the clear marking criteria provided for the specific pieces of assessment is an example of very good practice.

There did not appear to be a formal use of assessed oral presentations, however, and it may be worth considering incorporating it in some modules to further encourage development of skills such as oral literacy, presentation skills and teamwork.

It would be helpful to be provided at the start of the academic year (or each semester) with a list of all the key dates for when I should expect to receive exam question papers, exam scripts and essay samples, as far as this is practicable.

#### **7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)**

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

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

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

[ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk](mailto: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