

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.

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Alexandra Allan		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Exeter		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	MSc in Education, Policy and Society and MSc Childhood and Youth		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2016/17	Date of Report:	26/06/2017

Please complete all information in the spaces provided and submit within **six weeks** of the Examining Board (the **taught 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 Data Protection Act (1998).

Please extend spaces where necessary.

1. Programme Structure (curriculum design, programme structure and level, methods of teaching and learning)

This continues to be an exciting and contemporary programme where a wide range of modules are offered to students. It is the interesting and wide range of modules (bringing together policy, practice, empirical research and theory) offered to students which is a unique selling point for the programme. The fact that students from a range of social science disciplines come together on a number of compulsory taught modules is also of real benefit. It appears that a larger number of the modules offered this year are being taught through intensive workshops. It would be helpful to hear staff and student opinions on this – how it has worked for them in terms of teaching and learning, and also how this potentially impacts on their assessed work. The approach would seem to make sense in terms of teaching in concentrated bursts and allowing for intense engagement with particular issues, but also in allowing for a range of students to attend (e.g. those who may work alongside study).

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

I remain convinced that the staff working on this programme have high but fair expectations for their students and that the standard of work produced is comparable (if not superior in some respects – e.g. engagement with theoretical ideas) with that produced in other similar/competitor institutions. Many students achieve very highly on the programme and those who do less well seem to be given the appropriate support.

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

Some of the modules were exemplary in terms of the way the staff prepared student for assessment (e.g. use of formative work, high expectations for engagement in seminars, extensive reading lists, utilising a wide range of media/sources). On the whole I was impressed by the comparability of standards between modules of the same level. It was evident that there was consistency in the marking process. Assignments were suitably diverse – it was particularly encouraging to see that students were also asked to present their work in presentations as well as written essays, and that essays took different forms too. The assignments were also suitably challenging. I remain particularly impressed by the way in which they remain open enough for students to pursue their own particular substantive and research interests.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

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

I would only echo the positive comments that I have made in previous reports. The programme remains suitably challenging and exciting – it meets relevant benchmark statement requirements and is comparable to courses offered elsewhere. My only slight concern was that the comments I made in previous years, about variability of student feedback, appear not to have been addressed on some modules. I have suggested that the team consider whether it might be useful to agree minimum and maximum word counts for student feedback – in order to ensure consistency, fairness and to avoid staff burnout (i.e. in those constantly offering extensive feedback and often in a number of modules). It was also appeared to be the case that the second marking/moderation forms were not used as consistently as they had been in previous years. I have always found these very useful as they make the assessment process fully transparent, and so I would encourage the team to continue to use them across the programme.

5. Preparation for the role of External Examiner (for new External Examiners only) (appropriateness of briefing provided, visits to School, programme handbooks and supporting information)

N/A

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

- Some exemplary assessment feedback (particularly on the Childhood modules)
- An impressive grounding in theory and a variety of assignments (Critical perspectives module)
- An interesting arrangement of workshop sessions in some of the modules (e.g. Childhood policy module, which also includes some interesting talks from outside speakers)
- Thorough preparation for assessment (including interesting formative work and high expectations for reading and engagement in seminars)
- A wide range of exciting and contemporary modules which bring together theory, practice, policy and empirical research. Many modules are also international in their focus.

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

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?	X		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?		X	
Draft Examination Question Papers				
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
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?			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
Coursework and Practical Assessments				
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		
Clinical Examinations (if applicable)				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			X
Sampling of Work				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	X		
Examining Board Meeting				
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	
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?			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
Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)				
8.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?			X
8.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?			X
8.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?			X
8.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?			X
8.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?			X
8.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?			X

8.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?			X
8.30	Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations. <i>Please provide any comments you may wish to make on the issues raised above.</i> N/A			

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