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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Mary Hockaday		
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:	2018/19	Date of Report:	July 2019

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)

The MA in Broadcast Journalism is a high quality, industry-recognised programme which gives students a very good grounding in the principles of journalism, academic knowledge in Media Law and Public Administration as well as practical skills and experience relevant to an ever-changing industry. Students gain editorial and multi-platform skills and build their story-finding, newsgathering, story-telling and production skills. The programme challenges the most able and provides a good grounding for all. The Major project and the students Reflections are very successful in pulling together skills and experience, consolidating the hard and softer skills of broadcast journalism and preparing students for the world of work.

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

Cardiff remains very well-respected by the industry I encourage everyone to remain ambitious about who is accepted and the level students can aspire to. Journalists with strong skills, good values and resilience are vital for what is a very challenged but ultimately thriving and essential industry. 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)

The commitment of the Tutors is hugely impressive. They are rigorous assessors and clear eyed about the strengths and weaknesses of each student and each cohort. Attention to detail from factual accuracy, fairness and impartiality to decent writing and creative production skills remains essential, these are the building blocks for everything else. Students are given detailed and useful feedback. With few exceptions I have found the marking samples I have examined fair and appropriate.

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.]

Overall, I saw a good range of work and stories and was pleased to see some excellent story choices which felt journalistically original and relevant. The range of scores was smaller than some years – encouraging that all of the projects were presentable, good that the top work was of a very high standard, but perhaps lacking a candidate delivering at the very highest level. Shorthand Social complements the TV and Radio work and showcases a different range of skills.

The Reflections are very illuminating in demonstrating the extent to which students have developed a real understanding of journalistic practice – editorial, legal, ethical - as well as some of the practical aspects of finding sources willing to talk, craft skills and meeting deadlines. These pieces therefore reflect a considerable amount of work, journalism and thought, appropriate for a 'major project'.

The scoring and feedback sheets are considered and detailed and there is appropriate differentiation between work of different quality. I agree with the range and positioning in the sample I looked at. It is good to see feedback picking up in detail on journalistic merit, story construction, impartiality, range of voices, relevance for audiences and so on.

5. Year-on-Year Comments

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

It was a delight to visit the team and students in their new home in June. The facilities are excellent and I was pleased to hear that the teaching and technical team managed the move with relatively few hiccups and no disruption to students. The location is proving valuable in terms of connecting students to the city and their patch.

Attention to voice and delivery remains important. It is taught and evaluated but we discussed really emphasising to students how important it is – clearly for those pursuing a reporting role, but in fact for everyone – communication and presence is valuable whatever your role.

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)

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

One of the great strengths of the Cardiff programme is the 'patch' each student chooses – geographical, specialist and so on. It fosters depth and understanding and relies on building contacts and expertise, invaluable skills. There is a big variety in the stories students work on – the ones which really stand out are when a student steps away from the press release and finds stories in their communities and by talking to people. The softer skills of journalism may be hard to measure but are vital.

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

One feature of the past few years has been responding to changing audience behaviour and how to fit digital skills into a busy curriculum. Digital working is now fully embedded, shorthand is useful for testing a broad range of skills and students are also embracing podcasting. We discussed finding a way formally to evaluate the work students do on social video – which many newsrooms now produce as standard. This aspect of the curriculum will continue to change.

This year I was impressed by the range of placements for students, with a broader mix of public service and commercial newsrooms and more digital working too. Some students are also able to work with organisations with internal communication teams. This is valuable, but it must be clear these are not newsrooms and they must remain additional not core opportunities.

As platforms and technologies proliferate it is a challenge to balance fundamental skills with new technical and production skills favoured by industry. It is essential not to short-change the essential – accuracy, impartiality, law for journalists, good writing, good interviewing, story-finding, use of sources, essential voice, story-telling and production skills. Changing technical skills can always be learnt and adapted later.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to be involved with the School of Journalism for the past few years. The course leaders are very committed and have kept the reputation of Cardiff at the highest level. The course has carefully evolved while preserving the fundamentals. Journalism is an uncertain profession, Cardiff has a vital role to play in bringing a wide range of talented and committed students and sending them out into industry with the right skills and - even more importantly- the right values to serve the public well.

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:

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