



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr. Mark Campbell		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Architectural Association, London		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	Architecture / M.Arch Dissertations		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015-2016	Date of Report:	02 June 2016

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 aims of the program are extremely clear. The dissertation process of research, formulation, supervision and completion is clearly delineated in the Module Handbook. This process offers the student cohort an effective and timely methodology through which to pursue their work.

Students are provided with opportunities to formulate and discuss their work with peers and faculty, which provides the potential for research streaming and cross-fertilisation. The level of available supervisory support remains commendable.

### 2. Academic Standards

The standard of the dissertations and quality of the students in defending the work was high in relation to comparable institutions. The intellectual value of the dissertation module to student development is obvious and there were many well-produced dissertations over a wide range of topics. In comparison to previous years, however, the work of this cohort appeared weaker. In general the formulation and execution of the dissertation topics was effective in furthering the student's engagement with architecture - this engagement was often evident out during the oral examination.

### **3. The Assessment Process**

The assessment process for the module is exemplary: it is both rigorous and fair. The Internal Assessment of the dissertations includes several readings, providing a comprehensive, fair and balanced assessment of the individual dissertations. Finally, the oral examination provides an invaluable – and unique – opportunity for the student to discuss and defend their work in detail. In particular, the oral examination is commendable as it allows both a balanced assessment of the work and the opportunity for the student to relate the dissertation to their overall interests at the conclusion of their degree.

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

Overall, the standard and execution of the dissertations seemed slightly weaker in comparison to the 2013-14 and 2014-15 presentations. However, this does not seem to be a function of any alteration in teaching practices, but rather the abilities of this particular student cohort.

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

N/A.

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

The rigor with which the assessment process is undertaken is highly commendable.

In particular, the final oral examination provides a useful forum in which to discuss the student's work and their approach to the topic. This allows an opportunity to correlate the written work with the student's knowledge of their chosen subject area, together with facilitating a discussion of the value of the dissertation to their architectural knowledge.

In terms of enhancement, the adherence to a general methodology – in which the contextual theoretical formulation followed by case studies – is demonstrably useful in preparing weaker students to formulate and complete the dissertation. In the case of more intellectually able students, however, it would be productive to consider what other methods could be employed to push these dissertations further. For example, such students may benefit from additional group presentations, or additional supervisions.

### **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)
<b>Programme/Course Information</b>				
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		
<b>Draft Examination Question Papers</b>				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	Y		
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
<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?	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		
<b>Coursework and Practical Assessments</b>				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	Y		
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		
<b>Clinical Examinations (if applicable)</b>				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			N/A
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				

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

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