



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Paula Jane Waterhouse		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Newcastle University		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	Final BDS		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2013-14	Date of Report:	24.07.14

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 programme structure is sound and relevant. It is broad enough to satisfy the requirements of the GDC.

2. Academic Standards

The academic standards of these assessments are good and comparable with other similar assessments for this stage of BDS. The students performed well and at an equivalent level to my own institution and those I have externally examined previously.

3. The Assessment Process

The assessment process uses various different methods of assessment; ensuring a wide range of the curriculum is tested. I am pleased to note that the assessment team has made changes based upon previous years' recommendations. I was provided with all relevant information in good time. I was given the opportunity to comment upon the content and standard of the synoptic written assessments and would like to note that these were very good. I was also provided with relevant material to allow sampling of all written assessments during my visit. Further to this I was provided with evidence of students' clinical activity.

I was provided with all of the case presentations I was required to examine during my stay with sufficient time to mark these and formulate questions.

Overall, this is a robust examination conducted in a fair and transparent way. The BDS Final examination was subject to the GDC Inspection and all staff should be congratulated for managing well the external examiners and the Inspectors. I received excellent support from the administrative and nursing staff during my visit.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

Case Presentations:

I received an on-line training package before traveling to Cardiff. This package, designed to help standardise inter-examiner approach to conducting a face to face clinical examination was helpful. I understand that the assessment team will further develop this on-line resource and I support this initiative as good practice.

During this diet, the lead examiners all followed a standard procedure for arriving at a student's final mark. I mentioned a lack of standardised approach in last year's report and I am pleased to say this has now improved significantly.

The level of work and knowledge presented within the case reports is equivalent to students elsewhere.

More students this year showed itemised lists of what treatment was complete and again this was suggested last year and has been begun to be actioned. Similarly, more students included photographic evidence of the treatment they provided. Within the exam matrix there is a section for 10% additional marks. Again this year I found this a difficult section to mark and it is my opinion that this may contribute to variation between examiners. If the marking criteria were more detailed for this section it may be easier to award marks in a standard way.

Examination time is long and I am confident that reducing the overall exam time for the case presentation will still allow the examiners to fully assess each student (weak, average or strong). This would also allow some lee-way for potential future increase in student numbers.

Unseen Case Presentation:

There was a wide variety of cases used and all were prepared well for the examiners. As mentioned previously (in earlier reports) I am aware that a large amount of time and effort has been invested in preparation of these cases as Cardiff moved away from 'live patients'.

Some of the cases were complex and others were less so. As this examination continues to be developed, the assessment team should look at an approach to standardising the cases used and work towards providing a basic 'core list' of questions an examiner should ask, with additional complex questions for the stronger students.

There were very few paediatric cases (I am a paediatric dentist) and I do wonder if a student from Cardiff may pass final BDS without a 'face to face' assessment of their paediatric dentistry knowledge? Careful consideration should be given to ensuring all students are assessed at some stage of their dental undergraduate career for all of the degree programme's major learning outcomes. Logistically it may be impossible to ensure all students are examined in the unseen section for their management of an adult and also a child; however this approach should be considered by the assessment team.

Fewer cases would need to be used if cases were used repeatedly with quarantine of students to prevent 'examination memory' aiding the students examined later. This would also help towards standardising the examination further.

This examination could also be reduced by 5 minutes as described in the previous section (case presentations). The students should not be examined for the patient's history because they are provided with this as part of the case records. This would allow questioning to start earlier in the assessment and further help reduce the overall time requirements of the exam.

General:

In previous years' reports I mentioned development of the QA role of external examiners; moving away from using externals as 'active' examiners. I remain convinced that asking externals to observe internal examiners would allow closer scrutiny of overall consistency between individual examiners and examiner 'teams'. It would also provide a greater overview of the scope of questions asked and how they link to programme learning outcomes.

The Board of Examiners meeting was well organised, chaired with clarity and succinct. The external examiners were given good opportunity to provide verbal comments.

Overall the whole examination was conducted fairly and robustly. Thank you to everyone concerned once again for the excellent support and hospitality.

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

The on-line training package was helpful in its first year of use. I attended an examiner briefing presentation before the oral examinations. This was a useful reminder.

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

1. Excellent written unseen case notes for examiner teams.
2. The development of on-line training package for oral examinations.

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)
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				

		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		
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?			
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			

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:

Clive Brown, Registry Officer, Registry & Academic Services, Cardiff University,
McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE