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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Helen James		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of East Anglia		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	Primary BDS, Part 1		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018-19	Date of Report:	19 June 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)

As I've commented on in previous years, there is a good combination of biochemistry, physiology and anatomy that is both current and coherent. The structure and content of the programme are appropriate for the stated aims and learning objectives. There is a strong emphasis on examination style assessments (the end of year exam papers, plus the 'in course assessments' (ICAs)). To balance these, many practicals are undertaken and assessed, there is a 'spotter' test, and there is project work consisting of individual and group posters. Alongside these activities, students are also expected to start to develop their clinical experience and competencies. These are assessed on a P/F basis by reflective portfolio and viva. As the course team acknowledges, this is a heavy load for the students. However, the vast majority of the students cope, and many excel, with the content and assessment.

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

The year 1 curriculum fits well with the QAA benchmark statements for dentistry. It provides a number of opportunities to allow the students to start (or continue) to

develop a number of expected key competencies. During my visit, as in previous years, I had the opportunity to look at a number of pieces of student work (both coursework and examinations). The academic standards and achievements, across a range of ability students (I looked at the failing students' work, the top students and a few in between), were easily comparable to similar stage students that I am more familiar with. There were only a very few students that either failed the 'exam' component of the year, or failed the 'clinical' component of the year. The course team monitor student progress closely and part way through the year the Academic Review Committee have meetings with students at risk of failing; this has clearly helped a number of students successfully complete the year. As I noted last year, the changes introduced with their clinical portfolio have continued to support the students to succeed.

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

Broadly, the assessment pattern and process is unchanged in comparison to last year, with students undertaking coursework (including practical assessments and the 'spotter'), projects (including group work), and examinations (including ICAs), in addition to the clinical competencies. The range and extent of the assessment is challenging and rigorous, but appropriate. I was sent the examination papers, with model answers, to scrutinise in a timely manner. The students are very thoroughly assessed and all of the questions are well written and assess knowledge that is relevant to dentistry. There has been good progress made with respect to the questions asking for labelled diagrams; the full emphasis now being on the accuracy of the labels and not on the drawing itself. As was discussed at the exam board, it could be good if similar style questions on the ICAs also gave an indication of the number of labels / annotations required for full marks (as is now stated on the exam papers).

Two years ago, one ICA was removed to lighten the assessment load. This was the right step to take, but as noted last year, there are still many more students failing ICA3 in comparison to both ICA1 and 2. Having discussed this with the course team, it is clear that they have tried a number of things to try to rectify the situation (timing of ICA3, and teaching various content at different times of the year, for example). One aspect thought to be contributing to the poorer performance on ICA3 was one subject area that is new to the students, which many students struggled with.

In response to my comments last year, the paperwork given to us prior to the exam board included a question-by-question breakdown of the marks per student (for exams and ICAs), with the useful addition of the mean, maximum and minimum marks for each question. This allowed us to quickly identify which questions, and subject areas, the students struggled with (or indeed excelled at). I hope that this information will also help the course team identify which subject areas the students need more (or indeed less) help and guidance.

The emphasis put on practicals is one to be commended and an aspect of the course I encourage you to continue. The project work, allows the students to explore in depth a subject of interest both individually and as part of a group. The reflective report the students complete for the individual poster is invaluable in helping the students recognise what it takes to become independent learners, and in identifying

appropriate sources of information. I wonder if it would be appropriate to ask the students to also write a reflective piece about the production of the group poster too; working in teams is, after all, a critical component of being a dentist.

The Exam Board itself was run efficiently and the summary paperwork provided was very informative and helpful (as I've become accustomed to over the last four years). All the exam papers and project work was available to look at. Any queries I had were quickly dealt with, and answered in a satisfactory manner. Extenuating circumstances are dealt with suitably. Overall, I am happy that the assessment process is rigorous, but fair, and that marking is appropriate and consistent.

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.]

N/A

5. Year-on-Year Comments

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

The standard of assessments was very high as in previous years. The course team are clearly on top of this course, which is running very well, and producing well-prepared students to progress to the next stage of the dentistry programme. Any issues raised previously have been dealt with in a timely and satisfactory manner.

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)

N/A

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

- The academic review process whereby students at risk of failing are identified part way through the academic year, and an intervention is made to help with their progress.
- The range of assessments that challenge the students.
- The reflective commentary that the students submit as part of their individual project work.

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

I have thoroughly enjoyed my four years as external examiner for this programme. Each year I have been impressed with the extensive and detailed paperwork provided for the externals, and for the warm welcome we have received. I have been continually impressed with the high standards shown by the vast majority of the students, and the robustness of the assessment process (academic and clinical). Over my four years I have seen a number of changes: the introduction of standard setting of questions (now undertaken for the exams, ICAs and the spotter test) with the associated increase in the pass mark from 40% to 50%, the removal of the essay section of the exam papers, changes to the clinical assessment, and the slight reduction in the number of assessments. None of these changes have resulted in a drop in standards; indeed in my opinion the standards have probably increased.

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?	Y		
9.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?			N/A
Commenting on draft examination question papers				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	Y		
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
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?	Y		
9.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	Y		
9.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	Y		
9.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	Y		
9.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	Y		
Coursework and practical assessments				
9.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	Y		
9.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	Y		
9.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	Y		
9.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	Y		
Clinical examinations (if applicable)				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			N/A
Sampling of work				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
Examining board meeting				
9.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	Y		

9.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	Y		
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?	Y		
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?			N/A
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			N/A
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			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:

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