



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Dr Simon Gaisford		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University College London		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MPharm		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2014-15	Date of Report:	30 Sep 2015

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

I am satisfied that the programme structure is appropriate and provides education and training to meet the requirements of the GPhC. The syllabus is comprehensive and well organised.

### 2. Academic Standards

I reviewed a significant proportion of the examination booklets and project dissertations and it is clear that academic standards are high and appropriate. The academic level at which answers are provided increases through years 1-4 and are certainly comparable with those of other UK institutions I have reviewed.

### 3. The Assessment Process (including dissertations, if appropriate)

The assessment process is clear and fair. As has been the case every time I have reviewed material, excellent feedback was evident on the examination papers and I particularly liked the codes that indicated where answers fell short – this is a system that is both easy for the examiners to use, but very informative for reviewers. Project reports varied in the extent of evidence of feedback in the documents themselves, but all had a summary sheet properly filled in. It was also clear where work had been second marked. I made specific comments on various aspects of the course which I discussed with the course team and at the Exam Board, but have reproduced below for the record.

General points:

- Failures in c/w elements would usually cap module to bare pass, but following a student petition it has been agreed that only the individual component would be capped. There is the potential that students in the fourth year with capped modules in year 3 may complain this disadvantages them.
- Need to check students with a 69 in a qualifying module who may be eligible for compensation. There is a specific need to pay attention to modules in year 3, because these cannot be reviewed at the year 4 board.

PH2203/7203:

I am surprised that students must answer all questions. Results for this module were poor almost across the board, with only one student gaining a first mark. This particular paper, provided as an exemplar, really was good, and it demonstrates that if a student has grasped the material, the questions were fair. The other high mark exemplar had missing information and it was clear across the papers that the marks were fairly awarded. In general, I think the low marks were a result of poor long-question answers – so one aspect to look at is the practice and expectations that students get in respect of answering such questions. Also, given they are long-question answers, it would be helpful if the markers gave a small commentary on the scripts as to where the answers are deficient. I can see that fail papers were second marked, but it would be good to see selective second marking of exemplar and borderline papers also.

I have reviewed the fails and am happy that these fall below the required standard in all cases.

PH2107:

Calculations – all marking clear and fair.

Practicals – again, marking clear, consistent and fair. Fails are genuine fails.

Exams – Exemplars provided. Top marks very good answers in all sections. Middle marks show lack of information in some questions. Low marks appear to be from some zero or missing answers, rather than generally poor performance across the board. I am satisfied that the fails are true fails. Again, the fails come from too many zero marks, often because the questions were not attempted.

PH3112:

This paper is sat only by external students as it has been replaced with PH3114. I have checked all papers and am happy with the marks. The format of the paper seems overly complicated to me, with MCQs, short answer and long answer sections.

PH3114:

The format of this paper is simpler than that of 3112. Only 5 short-answer Qs plus an MCQ. I am happy that the marks are appropriate. It is clear from the exemplars provided that students obtaining lower marks are losing those marks in the short answer section, rather than the MCQ. The associated coursework was clearly marked.

Project comment:

Overall, projects are good. I like the format of shorter reports, more structured like a paper. It might be an idea to consider the introduction of portfolios – capturing a flavour of the effort a student has put into their project, with papers, meeting reports, lab books and critical commentaries for instance. A couple of general points; detailed mark sheets only provided for exemplar reports, not for those students on a borderline; and I could see no evidence of actual marking on any of the reports! This is useful to see, to indicate that the markers have read the reports and can provide commentary on any deficiencies.

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

This was my second year as External and I was pleased to see feedback from last year had been incorporated into the course. All External Examiners were invited to the research day presentations, and we were provided with a whole day to review papers and scripts. All exam papers and supporting documents were sent to me for review in good time and the lines of communication are clear. It was particularly helpful for the structure of the results reports, and university regulations, to be explained before the exam board. It was good to see that each student's marks were discussed and that all staff were engaged with the process and knew the academic regulations. Where students were on a borderline or had an unusual case I am happy that the discussions and decisions reached were fair and in the best interests of the student.

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

n/a

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

As noted above, I like the coding system during marking for noting where answers fell short and the system used for reporting marks. No vivas are permitted, which is a shame as meeting the students is an excellent way to assess quality, but invitations to poster days are welcome.

#### **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)
<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?	Y		
<b>Sampling of Work</b>				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
<b>Examining Board Meeting</b>				

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	Y		
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	Y		
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?	Y		
<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?			
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](mailto:ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk)

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Quality and Standards, Registry Officer, Registry & Academic Services, Cardiff University, McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE