

Guidance notes are available to support the completion of this Report via the Cardiff University Intranet [here](#) and from [ExternalExaminers@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:ExternalExaminers@cardiff.ac.uk).

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Rupert Payne		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Bristol		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	MSc/PgDip/PgCert in Therapeutics		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018/19	Date of Report:	24/9/2019

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)

This programme is primarily designed for medical, pharmacy and other health care professionals who wish to develop specialist skills/knowledge in relation to therapeutics. There are six key 20-credit taught modules, covering "generic" aspects (foundation module [primarily principles of evidence-based practice], safe prescribing), and four specific clinical modules including multi-speciality modules (e.g. pain, musculoskeletal and endocrine) and a cardiovascular-specific module. The certificate is a 60 credit course, diploma 120 course; the MSc entails a dissertation contribution to 50% of the assessment (not assessed this year). Course materials are clear, detailed and appropriate, delivered through an e-learning platform, and learning takes a problem-orientated approach. The course is relevant to practice and appropriate to the requirements of those who will be undertaking it.

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

Standards are good, and I believe them to be comparable to those of similar programmes in other UK HEIs.

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

Assessment involves MCQs and one written task per module. A single marker assesses each essay set for consistency, with double-marking of essays that fail, those at grade-boundaries, and 10% of others. There are no “model answer” marking schemes (other than for numeric answers), and markers apply standard generic University-wide assessment criteria. I was able to review samples of written questions from across all the modules.

The written questions were appropriate and fair. It was noted that the written topics varied in complexity and focus: some questions raised issues which were very specific, underpinned by established clinical practice, a strong evidence base and clear guidance; other topics, however, were far broader (e.g. medicines management, absence of clear evidence). In particular, the former had the disadvantage of offering less opportunity to challenge the student, particularly in terms of creativity/originality; the latter had the disadvantage of being perhaps too open to interpretation and thus less comparable. Nevertheless, taken together the range of questions presented a good balance that tested a range of skills across the whole course, in addition to more module-specific knowledge and understanding. This issues were raised and discussed at the exam board meeting.

Rates of distinction were high raising concern that questions could be more challenging and more discriminatory.

- 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.]*

None reviewed this year.

#### **5. Year-on-Year Comments**

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

Ongoing concerns about high levels of distinctions; this has been raised for several years.

- 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) Problem-based learning approach and keeping the programme highly relevant to practice is encouraging and should be continued.

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

N/A

## 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)
<b>Programme/Course information</b>				
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
<b>Commenting on draft examination question papers</b>				
9.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?		N	
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?			N/A
<b>Examination scripts</b>				
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		
<b>Coursework and practical assessments</b>				
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		
<b>Clinical examinations (if applicable)</b>				
9.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			N/A
<b>Sampling of work</b>				
9.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	Y		
<b>Examining board meeting</b>				
9.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	Y		

	(attended via teleconference)			
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		
<b>Joint examining board meeting (if applicable)</b>				
9.20	Did you attend a Composite Examining Board, i.e. one convened to consider the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>N/A</b>
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>N/A</b>
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			<b>N/A</b>

Please return this Report, **in a Microsoft Word format**, by email to:  
[externalexaminers@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto: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:

External Examiners, Registry, Cardiff University, McKenzie House, 30-36 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DE