



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Michele Raithby		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Swansea University		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MA Social Work		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2014-2015	Date of Report:	20 th July 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

As noted last year, the MA Social Work Programme fulfils the Care Council for Wales framework for social work degrees in Wales, and conforms to QAA subject benchmarks. The curriculum is coherent, addresses a suitable range of practice areas, and integrates user and carer involvement into its management and teaching structure. Students graduating into their first year of practice are equipped with the necessary knowledge of current legislation, but also a very sound knowledge of the legal details and practice principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, which will come into force in April 2016.

The destination survey of graduands conducted by the Programme Director shows a high level of employment in chosen fields of practice (including some in social enterprises, which is likely to be a growing area of social work employment in Wales), with the majority of students remaining in Wales. The majority of students are entering employment in Children & Family work, which is in line with the employment opportunities and choices in the rest of Wales and other devolved nations. Nevertheless, learning in the areas of social work with both adult care and children continues to be strong, providing a valuable generic base prior to post-qualifying specialisation.

2. Academic Standards

The standards of work in the samples of work seen, reflected in the marks achieved, are high, and are comparable with other UK HEIs of which I have had experience at

Masters level. I have made individual comments on all modules and samples of work seen across the two years. Graduates of the Programme can demonstrate very good levels of knowledge of theory and legislation and their application to social work practice, and I saw examples of sophisticated critical analysis across both years.

From the portfolios of work undertaken in Practice Learning Opportunities, there was evidence of development of relevant skills, knowledge base and reflection on practice, aided by constructive guidance from Practice Assessors.

3. The Assessment Process

The range of academic assessment tasks is varied, and provides all students with a good grounding of knowledge both relevant for and directly applied to practice, as well as the opportunity to excel. There is a good mix of essays, presentational tasks and tests that address a range of skills and knowledge. Marks are fair, student feedback is full and helpful, and moderation processes are thorough. User involvement in assessment is being considered by the Programme, which will build on their existing partnerships in other areas of the Programme. One area for development in the next academic year is the approval in advance of draft examination papers contributing to the final award (8.3).

4. Year-on-Year Comments

At the Assessment Board on July 17th, I had the opportunity to see the graduation of the first cohort of students since I began examining. The results this year were excellent, with many Distinctions as well as Merits. My fellow External Examiner noted that two students achieved Distinction grades in all of their modules, which is an exceptional achievement.

This year, the Programme arranged for some first and second year students to meet with External Examiners prior to the Summer Assessment Board. This was a very welcome initiative, and provided the opportunity for positive discussions with current students who demonstrated commitment to the profession and appreciation of the thorough learning opportunities provided by the Programme.

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

N/A.

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

The dissertations offer students the opportunity for small-scale empirical work, as well as an option for literature-based work. I saw an example of the benefits of the strong partnerships the Programme has with its practice agencies, with students able to conduct research on topics useful to practice and situations that are specific to those agencies.

As noted above, graduates of the Programme have an excellent grounding in the changing legislation in Wales. Teaching the principles of new legislation and how has the potential to radically change practice throughout Wales has been integrated throughout learning and assessment, and is a strength of the Programme.

Communication and constructive dialogue with the Programme academic and administrative team remain excellent.

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

		Yes (Y)	No (N)	N/A (N/A)
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	Y (2)		
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		
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?			N/A
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			N/A
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			N/A

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