



## EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Robin Sen		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Sheffield		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	MA/PG Diploma in Social Work at Cardiff		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2015 – 2016	Date of Report:	19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2016

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

Two year post-graduate qualifying social work degree programme, meeting requirements set by Care Council for Wales. Practice partners and service users and carers are appropriately involved within the programme. The programme material reflects the distinctly Welsh practice and policy context and increasing divergence in the Welsh policy context (e.g. Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act) has seen this distinctness increase slightly over the last year. However, the subject content and the structure of the programme is broadly comparable to programmes in England (and to some degree Scotland) with which I am familiar. The programme integrates a Masters qualification through completion of a research dissertation and is a generic programme offering education in both adult and children’s services practice, albeit students choose an area of preference in their second year, which is then linked to their third and final practice learning experience.

### 2. Academic Standards

The standards expected of students and achieved by them in their academic work compare well with other post-graduate programmes with which I am familiar. The course has a strong and welcome emphasis on developing students as both critical thinkers as well as social work practitioners, the former being evident in the type and standard of dissertation work produced by students on the course. Standards of written work expected from students are rigorous. The strongest student work I have seen is of a very high standard. Student work which I have seen which has been

awarded fail marks are clearly below the standards required on a post-graduate course and feedback given to students failing is clear on the reasons for the work failing, and helpful.

Student feedback from the four students the External Examiners met was overall very positive about the course and the commitment of the staff team to their learning.

### **3. The Assessment Process**

There is a good range of assessment tasks which are well thought through and link well to the particular learning outcomes in given modules. Of particular note is the consistent way in which thought has been given to trying to make links between academic assessment of student learning and practice learning through assessment tasks. The input and importance of practice agencies and practice educators within the assessment of student learning is very evident and visible. 'Service user and carer' involvement is evident in the assessment of some of the student placement work and was also reflected by the attendance of a 'service user and carer' representative at the Exam Board who spoke positively about their involvement in the course.

Academic feedback is detailed, helpful and clear. I have made a small number of suggestions about how this feedback might be further improved still in future.

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

It is pleasing to see that minor suggestions for improvement which were made in last year's feedback (e.g. around layout of dissertation marking form) have been considered. The course appear open and indeed actively invite constructive challenge about how the course could be further improved. I would again like to expressly note the helpful and efficient support of the course administrator [REDACTED].

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

Not applicable.

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

- ❖ *Overall academic standards on the course are high.*
- ❖ *A focus on developing social work students as critical thinkers as well as social work practitioners is evident and welcome.*
- ❖ *Research dissertations show students' ability to undertake empirical studies and produce meaningful and important findings.*
- ❖ *The course team is very open to discussion and suggestions as to ways in which the course might be further improved.*

- ❖ *The administrative support for the course (and External Examiners within this) is excellent.*
- ❖ *Available student and 'service user and carer' feedback on the course is overwhelmingly positive.*

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

		<b>Yes (Y)</b>	<b>No (N)</b>	<b>N/A (N/A)</b>
8.17	Were you able to attend the Examining Board meeting?	<b>Y</b>		
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?	<b>Y</b>		
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?	<b>Y</b>		
<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?			<b>N/A</b>
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			<b>N/A</b>
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			<b>N/A</b>

Please return this Report, preferably in a Microsoft Word format, by email to:

[ExternalExaminers@cf.ac.uk](mailto: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