



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Professor Peter Thompson		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of York		
Programme and / or Subjects Covered by this Report:	BSC Psychology BSc Psychology with professional placement		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2013-14	Date of Report:	11/07/14

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

The degree provides a broad range of topics with Psychology to be studied with the opportunity for specialisation later in the course

2. Academic Standards

Cardiff recruits high quality students who receive first class teaching in an exceptional well-run department. Its top students would be First class in any comparable Russell group university.

3. The Assessment Process

Assessment seems very fair with some excellent feedback to students. The general 'paper trail' of marking procedures is exemplary. An appropriate variety of methods of assessments is adopted, and the volume of assessment is appropriate. The introduction of allowing students to bring a sheet of notes into exams has now been in operation for a couple of years and, while I remain largely in favour of the experiment, I appreciate it has both pros and cons. I am sure the department will monitor this welcome innovation over the years.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

The role of the external examiner has changed during the 4 years that I have been at Cardiff. In the initial year the task was to scrutinise marks and to help determine class boundaries. Now the determination of class boundaries is almost entirely formulaic, and the role of examiner is largely to check that the department has appropriate and consistent standards. This makes the job easier and more

enjoyable. It has provided this examiner with new and interesting ideas to take back to his home department.

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

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement

The use of the notes taken into exams impressed me greatly when it was introduced and certainly it allows students to concentrate on the issues rather than just learning a series of authors and dates. Consequently more probing questions can be asked in examinations and it is important that more probing questions are asked; otherwise there is a danger of a ceiling effect where top students find it harder to rise above the pack. The 4-year BSc with a placement year is the jewel in the crown of the department; a fantastic opportunity for students which really pays dividends in the quality of their final year work.

7. Appointment Overview (for retiring External Examiners only)

It has been an immense privilege to act as external examiner for this department over the past 4 years. I have been particularly impressed by the breadth of topic covered and the quality of support given to students. One nearly-unique feature of the course is the option for a four-year course in which a 'professional placement' is sandwiched between the second and final years. This is clearly a popular route which produces students of the highest quality. I believed, when I took up the position of external examiner, that the Cardiff department was one of the strongest in the country. Now, 4 years later, I know it to be so.

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?	X		
8.2	Were you asked to comment on any changes to the assessment of the Programme?		X	
Draft Examination Question Papers				
8.3	Were you asked to approve all examination papers contributing to the final award?	X		
8.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	X		
8.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	X		
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?	X		
8.7	Was the general standard and consistency of marking appropriate?	X		
8.8	Were the scripts marked in such a way as to enable you to see the reasons for the award of given marks?	X		
8.9	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the internal examiners?	X		
8.10	In your judgement, did you have the opportunity to examine a sufficient cross-section of candidates' work contributing to the final assessment?	X		
Coursework and Practical Assessments				
8.11	Was the choice of subjects for coursework and / or practical assessments appropriate?	X		
8.12	Were you afforded access to an appropriate sample of coursework and / or practical assessments?	X		
8.13	Was the method and general standard of assessment appropriate?	X		
8.14	Is sufficient feedback provided to students on their assessed work?	X		
Clinical Examinations (if applicable)				
8.15	Were satisfactory arrangements made for the conduct of clinical assessments?			X
Sampling of Work				
8.16	Were you afforded sufficient time to consider samples of assessed work?	X		
Examining Board Meeting				

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

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