



EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORT FORM

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

	For completion by External Examiner:		
Name of External Examiner:	Sarah Maitland		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Goldsmiths, University of London		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	MA in Translation Studies		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2016-2017	Date of Report:	29 June 2017

Please complete all information in the spaces provided and submit within **six weeks** of the Examining Board (the **taught 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 Data Protection Act (1998).

Please extend spaces where necessary.

1. **Programme Structure** (curriculum design, programme structure and level, methods of teaching and learning)

The level of detail provided in the programme and module documentation is exemplary and the aims and objectives of modules are evident in the students' work I examined. I believe that the highly favourable degree of direct contact time with students is to be commended, as is the degree of support given to students through the provision of specialist workshops dedicated to the needs of a particular assessment. The methods of teaching and learning are diverse, enabling students to benefit from a broad range of approaches to translation, from the theoretical and critical to the technological and practical, and the content across the programme is varied, enabling students to develop skills in a wide range of relevant areas of professional practice.

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

The MA compares favourably with other programmes of a similar nature of which I am aware, in terms of the assessment regime, its standards and approach to

marking, feedback, the length, make-up and quality of assessment, and the structure and content of the programme as a whole. There is evidence of outstanding work on the part of students and the healthy student numbers and number of assessments attaining merit and distinction-level marks are to be commended.

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

The content of modules gives students good preparation and development towards assessment, and the standards of marking across the programme are of a high level. The achievement of module aims and learning outcomes is in clear evidence in the students' work I examined across the programme and is reflective of solid work on the part of tutors to support students and encourage development of skills and abilities over the course of the academic year. There is a good balance between critically-orientated assessment of an essay-based nature, and concrete practical translation assessment.

I recommend that in the course-kits for the practical translation modules the specific percentage weighting of translation versus commentary be provided for students, alongside translation marking criteria. With regard to the exams included as part of modules in the first semester, I am conscious that students on these modules who speak English as a foreign language - and who would most likely in a professional setting write translations of English texts in their own first language - are required to produce work under exam conditions in their foreign language. I recommend that colleagues explore the possibility of a coursework alternative to an exams method that would enable students who speak English as a foreign language to develop and consolidate their research and essay-writing skills outside of the necessarily condensed framework an exam situation entails and to benefit from the detailed feedback that an essay-based marking system provides. A coursework method would also have the benefit of reflecting directly the most common method of freelance professional translation work. I believe that the marginal feedback comments and feedback provided at the foot of exam scripts is highly valuable for students' development going into the second semester. If students are not already routinely accessing this form of exam-script-based feedback, I recommend that the feedback be circulated formally to all students concerned.

4. Year-on-Year Comments

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

The 2014-2015 report provided on the website makes the recommendation that a wider range of marks at the upper end of the scale be used, and this is in evidence across each of the modules. As I also recommend below, I encourage colleagues to also take on board the lower end of the marking scale, where the marks given to scripts I examined did tend towards the generous across all modules in the programme.

5. Preparation for the role of External Examiner (for new External Examiners only) (appropriateness of briefing provided, visits to School, programme handbooks and supporting information)

Preparation for the role of External Examiner was exemplary, with all relevant documentation, including programme and module specifications, provided electronically. In line with practice in the sector, as a new External Examiner, the

provision of a mentor, in the figure of a current and experienced External Examiner in the School, would have been welcomed greatly, and I encourage this practice to be considered for future External Examiners who are joining Cardiff as their first External Examiner appointment.

6. Noteworthy Practice and Enhancement (good and innovative practice in learning, teaching and assessment; opportunities for enhancement of learning opportunities)

Student numbers:

Student numbers are healthy and there is a clear commitment to offering diverse learning experience and development opportunities across the programme, with a varied and interesting range of content offered. Well done! The provision of a work placement and a large number of specialised translation modules focusing on concrete translation practice is to be commended.

Range:

There is a clear commitment to embracing the upper end of the marking scale and there was an exciting number of merit and distinction-level marks awarded. I encourage colleagues to also take on board the lower end of the marking scale, where the marks given to scripts I examined did tend towards the generous across all modules in the programme.

Feedback:

The commitment to detailed and constructive assessment feedback was exemplary across the majority of modules. Tutors marking these modules took an active approach to feedback, seeing it as a developmental tool for students, addressing students directly and offering specific suggestions for improvement. In comparison to the level of feedback offered across the other modules, the feedback on the exam components, while wholly appropriate, constructive and developmentally-orientated, was comparatively a little briefer than feedback offered on other modules. I recommend that an agreed approach to the length, content and consistency of feedback be taken across all modules in the programme as a whole.

Organisation:

The organisation of material for examining during the day leading up to the afternoon Board was exemplary, with each set of module scripts supplied alongside a copy of the course kit and marks overview. This facilitated an efficient examining process and I am grateful to all colleagues who worked together to ensure a very smooth and fruitful process. Given the volume of scripts for examination, I believe it is worthwhile setting aside a greater amount of time for the moderation process on the day leading up to the Board and recommend starting at 0900 instead of 1000. To facilitate an understanding of individual student progression across the programme, I also recommend that the examining report giving individual student results be provided at the beginning of the examination day leading up to the afternoon Board. I further recommend that, in the presentation of materials for examination, the dates/semester in which a module took place be made clear so as to facilitate a better visual understanding of the organisation of the modules and developmental progression of content.

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

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/A
Draft Examination Question Papers				
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		
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				

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		
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
Examination of Master's Dissertations (if applicable)				
8.23	Did you receive a sufficient number of Dissertations to be able to assess whether the internal marking and classifications were appropriate and consistent?			N/A
8.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?			N/A
8.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?			N/A
8.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?			N/A
8.27	If so, was the Examining Board conducted properly and in accordance with established procedures?			N/A
8.28	Were the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?			N/A
8.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?			N/A
8.30	Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations. <i>Please provide any comments you may wish to make on the issues raised above.</i>			

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

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