

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:	Prof Pieter de Wilde		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	University of Plymouth		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	MSc Environmental Design of Buildings		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018-2019	Date of Report:	07/06/2019

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)

The programme being reviewed in this report is the MSc Environmental Design of Buildings (EDB) at the Cardiff University- Welsh School of Architecture. The programme is offered as full time, part time and as distance learning mode. It consists of 8 taught modules plus 1 dissertation module. Out of the 8 taught modules, 3 are specific to EDB; the other 5 are shared with the MSc Sustainable Mega Buildings (MEGA) and Advanced Building Performance Evaluation (BDEEP).

The programme structure is well-established with only minor changes (one change of module leader, and minor changes of deliverables in the project) since 2017-2018. Student numbers remain good, with a slight shift towards more distance learning this year in comparison to last year (10 FT, 3PT, 24DL).

The programme level is clearly MSc, and is delivered accordingly. Assessment consists of the typical range of formal testing (building physics), coursework where knowledge is required to produce design outcomes and assessment work, and academic research challenges such as paper writing and dissertations.

Students on the MSc EDB are overall happy with the course; they have the typical minor comments about workload at certain times of the year but this not something

that strikes me as extraordinary. A minor issue is access to computing facilities. If feasible, the students would like the staff to consider providing further support for the job search that comes after completion of the course.

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

The academic standards for EDB (as well as MEGA and BDEEP) are high and fully comparable with other MSc countries across the UK. All modules at least have a sample of the work moderated by a second member of staff; other modules are double marked.

I reviewed a selection of the material provided, ensuring to see a spread of marks that covers all failed attempts, some work in the middle of the range, and some work at the high end. I am satisfied that all marking was fair and that the reason why these marks were achieved was in line with the feedback provided to students.

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

Overall marks provided were clearly based on a transparent assessment process, with good feedback to the students and signposting of where additional marks could have been earned. The feedback is ok for all modules, but as noted in my report for 2017-2018 there still remain some variations in the amount of feedback provided; I recommend that the academic team reviews this issue in order to ensure student expectations are managed.

**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.]*

At this visit, I have reviewed a large number of dissertations, covering dissertations submitted in fall 2018 as well as spring 2019. As for the other modules I reviewed a selection of the material provided, ensuring to see a spread of marks that covers all failed attempts, some work in the middle of the range, and some work at the high end. Additionally, I have read all abstracts of all submissions in order to get a good feel for the range of topics covered.

The marking scheme for the dissertations is clear and well-established. Standard of marking is high, with all work double marked and third marking in place where there may be any issues.

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

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

Overall the MSc Environmental Design of Buildings is a well-established, smooth running programme. A suggestion already made last year is the issue of whether

the amount of modules could be reduced; in total there are now 9, which is a high number, and some of these only count for 10 credits. Could you have less modules and thereby ease your workload?

**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)

(not applicable)

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

The distance learning element of the EDB course keeps doing extremely well, and is increasing student numbers. As per previous year, the team is commended for the hard work that goes into this extra load.

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

(this is my third year in post, but I believe that I will be asked to stay in the role for an additional year so this is not applicable)

## 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?	Y		
9.4	Were the nature, spread and level of the questions appropriate?	Y		
9.5	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?	Y		
<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		

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?		N	
9.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			N/A
9.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			N/A

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