

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:	Kevin Rafter		
Home Institution / Employer of External Examiner:	Dublin City University		
Programme and / or Modules Covered by this Report	Political Communication		
Academic Year / Period Covered by this Report:	2018/19	Date of Report:	2 Dec 2019

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)

July 2019

This is my fourth – and final – report as External Examiner for the MA in International Political Communication at Cardiff University. Unlike in the previous three summers, I was unable to visit Cardiff in July 2019 due to holiday plans.

I was sent material for eight modules through Blackboard:

MCT533/Putting Research into Practice I
MCT534/Putting Research into Practice 2
MCT565/Debates and Concepts in Media and Communications
MCT506/Introduction to Political Communication
MCT566/Media and Political Understanding
MCT540/Social Media and Politics
MCT567/Public Relations, Offline and Online
MCT568/Digital Economy, Digital Labour

Access online was straightforward and the documentation - module outlines, assignment handout and student work - was available in most instances.

Having reviewed the material, no particular concerns were identified.

The background information for students is comprehensive and easily understood.

The work provided matched the grade bands - I spent more time with the core module material than with the optional modules.

Overall, I had no issues with marking or feedback provided.

Student work included an interesting collection of essays – generally well written – although as discussed in my previous reports/visits there were some English language concerns.

There was strong evidence of engagement with the academic literature and real world issues.

Brexit featured strongly as an assessment topic - to be expected - but it might be worth checking across all the modules to coordinate how the topic is being delivered to avoid duplicating material.

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

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

4. Year-on-Year Comments

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

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)

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

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

As this is my final year as External Examiner would you please pass on my thanks to the academic and administrative staff who I have worked with over the last four years. The MA Political Communication degree is very well run with very high standards across delivery and assessment.

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?			N/A
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?		N	
8.18	Was the Examining Board conducted properly, in accordance with established procedures and to your satisfaction?			N/A
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?			N/A
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?			
8.21	If so, were you made aware of the procedures and conventions for the award of Joint Honours degrees?			
8.22	Was the Composite Examining Board conducted according to its rules?			
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?	Y		
8.24	Was the sample in accordance with the University's sampling guidelines (guidelines provided below)?	Y		
8.25	Were you satisfied with the standard and consistency of marking applied by the Internal Examiners?	Y		
8.26	Were you able to attend the Master's Degree (Dissertation) Stage Examining Board?		N	
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?	Y		
8.29	Were the standards of the awards recommended appropriate?	Y		
8.30	<p>Comments on the Examination of Master's Dissertations. <i>Please provide any comments you may wish to make on the issues raised above.</i></p> <p>December 2019</p> <p>I was provided with eight dissertations and related feedback forms completed by staff grading the research projects under consideration: [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>			

The eight dissertations reviewed ranged across the grade bands (40-80).

The differentiation in marks awarded was fair, consistent and reflected of the quality of the work viewed.

The two higher graded dissertations (80; 74) had strong engagement with their respective topics, very good literature reviews, robust approaches to methodology and good connection of findings to core literature in the relevant areas.

The dissertation with the lowest mark (40) was appropriately graded.

Markers made good use of the grade bands.

I was also provided with written feedback from first and second readers. This feedback was comprehensive and contained constructive comments on the work under review.

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